KIRAT KHAMBU RAIS OF SIKKIM AND EASTERN HIMALAYAS

Dr. Shiva Kumar Rai (Sampang)

The Kirat Khambu Rais of Sikkim and Eastern Himalayas

Dr. Shiva Kumar Rai (Sampang)

This Book is Dedicated
to
The Kirat Khambu Rais
of Sikkim
and Eastern Himalayas.

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FOREWORD

The book,The Kirat Khambu Rai of Sikkim and Eastern Himalays, by Dr Shiva Kumar Rai, is principally a book on the history, culture and traditions of the ancient Kirat Khambu Rai Tribe of Sikkim, West Bengal, North East regions of India and Nepal, which formed a part of Kiratadesha (the land of the Kiratas) in ancient times. The Khambus (Rais) occupy a prominent place among those who are known as the Kiratas-one of the primitive or oldest tribal communities of India. They have several sub-groups (Thars) like Kulung,Thulung, Khaling, Chamling, Sampang, Bantawa, etc. The Author in his monumental work has provided detailed information regarding their origin, antiquity, ethnology, geographical distribution, settlement-patterns, social life, customs, traditions, rites of passage, institutions, economic conditions, traditional political system, religious beliefs and practices, rich cultural heritage, language and script and so on. This valuable treatise contains all relevant information about the life, culture and civilization of the Kirat Khambu Rai Tribe of Sikkim and Eastern Himalayas. The learned author has also focused on the ethological relations between the Rais and the Limbus and other Kirat tribes of Sikkim and Eastern Himalayas.

The Demographic chart based on the census conducted in 1891,1991 and 2001 in Sikkim and the statistical data, contained in the work have some reflection on the subject. They also supplement the statements of the author relating to the subject. The maps and illustration shown in the body of work enhances its value. A map showing the migration of the Kiratas, the map of the "Greater Sikkim which includes the eastern part of Nepal," "Greater Nepal which includes parts of Sikkim and British India" and "the map of the Eastern Nepal" showing the geographical position and the location of the tribe people, including the Kiratas, are of great historical value. The illustrations portray the physical features, life-style, costumes and ornaments, socio-religious customs and rituals, traditional beliefs and practices, etc. of the Kirat Kambus Rai of Sikkim and Eastern Himalayas. The author's findings on the whole, are based on original sources, standard modern works on the subject, some general works and other relevant sources, as appears from the references appended at the end of the work.

The author has, no doubt, made significant contribution through this work to the enrichment of our knowledge of the history and culture of the aboriginal Kiratas of Sikkim and the Eastern Himalayas.

The present volume constitutes a valuable addition to the works on ethno-history of the Kirats of Sikkim and Eastern Himalaya. It will be very useful to anthropologists, historians, and those scholars who intend to make further disquisition on this subject.

(Prof G.P. Singh)

Imphal
February 07, 2005

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During one of the meetings with the Honourable Chief Minister of Sikkim, Dr. Pawan Chamling, in 1995, his honour suggested that we should take up research work on our history, culture, tradition, language, script, customs, etc and if need be go abroad (UK and USA) where the materials are available.

It was only after eight years in 2003, while doing a research work on my community- "Kirat Khambu Rais," I decided to go to the British Library, London and Bodleian Library, Oxford University, UK. When I went to meet the honourable Chief Minister regarding it, his honour suggested that I should bring back documents, manuscripts, books, etc on the history, culture, tradition, language, script, etc of the various ethnic communities/tribes of Sikkim, rather then one particular ethnic community/tribe. Therefore I have bought back copies of the manuscript, books, maps etc on Sikkim from British & Bodleian Library, UK and handed them over to the Sikkim State Archives, Gangtok, Sikkim.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Honorable Chief Minister of Sikkim, Dr Pawan Chamling for encouraging me to take this research work. I would like to also thank his honour for granting me permission to go to the United Kingdom, for sending a letter of introduction and books on Sikkim to the British Library, UK and other assistance.

I am indebted to the Principle Secretary to the Chief Minister, Mr R.S. Basnet, Ms Chumden Nangpa and Mr Anil Rai of Sikkim State Archives for their kind assistance and for sending a letter of introduction to the British Library.

This collection would not have been possible without the assistance of Ms Penny Brook and Dr Jill Geber of India Office Records Asia-Pacific and Africa Collection, British Library, London, UK and the staff of Bodleian Library, Oxford University, UK.

I would also like to thank Prof. John Ball and Mrs Sedhar, Prof of Mathematics, Oxford University for providing us with accommodation and assistance and giving me a letter of introduction to the Bodleian Library, Oxford University. Similarly I would like to thank Dr. Samden and Sonam Lhatoo of Bristol, Mrs. E.M. Gray, Mr. Rohn Gray, Vanda, Billy and Ms. Colquhoun of Scotland for their assistance.

I would be failing in my duty if I did not thank my wife Kabita and my son Shivwin, for their assistance in typing the manuscript of this book and bearing with me during my research work.

I would like to thank all members of the Akhil Kirat Rai Sangh Sikkim, Kirat Khambu Rai Sanskritik Sansthan, Darjeeling & Kalimpong and Kirat Rai Yayokha, Kathmandu for their valuable contributions and suggestions. I am grateful especially to Mr. B. B. Rai of Tikpur, Mr. P. D. Rai, Dr. B. B. Rai, Mr. Santosh Kumar Rai, Mr. R. K. Rai, Mr. J. P. Rai, Mr. J. B. Rai, Mr. Topden Rai, Mr. Damber Rai, Mr. Rohit Paul Rai, Prof Amrit Khaling of Kalimpong, Prof Novel Kishore Rai of Tribhuwan University, Dr. Moti Bir Rai & Mr. Hemu Rai of Darjeeling, Mr. C.M.Khambu of Namchi, Mr. Tashi Topden, Dr. T. R. Gyatso and Mr. Palden Gyamptso (M.P.) for providing me books on Kiratas, History of Sikkim and People of Nepal.

I am grateful to Mr. Nakul Das Rai, Honourable MP (Lok Sabha) for the photographs and villagers of Assam Lingzey and Nandok for assisting us in our field visit. I am thankful to Mr. J. R. Subba (Pondhak) for the various maps and information.

In compiling this book, I have borrowed freely from every authority who has written about the Kiratas and Kirat Khambu Rais :- especially Prof G.P.Singh, Prof T.B.Subba, Dr, Martin Gaenszle, Prof Balthasar Bickel, Charles Mc. Dougal, Eden Vansittart, W.B.Northey, Sueyoshi Toba, Brian Hodgson, Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, Imam Singh Chemzong, Dr. Sonam B. Wangyal and Prof. Gangmumei Kabui. I will be failing in my duty if I did not thank all these renowned authors for their research work and contributions towards the Kirat Khambu Rai community.

In many portions of the book, especially on the historical facts, I have utilized extracts from various authors. I have been unable to put between inverted commas every borrowed paragraph; but where possible, I have generally done so, and have quoted the name of the author from whose book the extract has been taken.

As you go through this book, you will come across many deficiencies – especially from a scholar's point of view, since it is written by neither a scholar nor a PHD student. I am just an ordinary Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeon who has a special interest in my own history, culture and tradition. Having been educated in a Residential Missionary School, I had lost touch with many of my culture and traditions, but after I started participating in the activities of the Akhil Kirat Rai Sangh Sikkim, this new interest germinated. If there are errors and deficiencies in this book, the reader is requested to send the feedback to the author, so that the author may rectify the same in the next edition.

In my new interest, I observed, that no one has ventured to write a combined book on Kirat Khambu Rais because there are more than 50 subgroups / thars, each speaking different dialect. Basically the culture and tradition are same, except for some subtle differences observed in the various subgroups / thars. It is therefore a monumental task to combine all the customs and traditions and bring it out in a book form.

Some may not agree with what I have written but since this is a pioneer venture, I sincerely hope that it is taken in good spirit. Till date studies have been carried out and books written about Kirat Khambu Rais mainly of Nepal and that too mostly by foreign writers. I felt the need that someone from Sikkim should write about the Kirat Kahmbu Rais of Sikkim and so here am I.

When the Bantawa dialect was adopted as the official Kirat Khambu Rai Language and text books written in the Kirat Khambu Rai script in Sikkim, there was much hue and cry. But it is encouraging to know that gradually everyone has accepted them. Today they are accepted well even in Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Kurseong, Doars, Mirik of West Bengal and Nepal.

The above step taken by Akhil Kirat Rai Sangh Sikkim under the patronage of Government of Sikkim is like what the astronaut Neil Amstrong said when he stepped on the moon for the first time – 'It is a single step for man, but a giant leap for mankind'.

It is indeed a great challenge for all Kirat Khambu Rais to work towards homogenization of our language (dialect) and culture. We must endeavor to bring uniformity (ekrupta) in everything and dispel the notion - ' Jati Rai Uti Kura' (There are as many languages as there are Rais). I do hope that this maiden venture will generate some interest in the younger Kirat Khambu Rai Scholars of Sikkim and that in near future someone will undertake deeper studies with wider research in this field. And if this comes about, I shall feel that my labour will not have been in vain.

Shivarai

Gangtok Sikkim
March 2005

(Dr. Shiva Kumar Rai)

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KIRAT KHAMBU RAIS OF SIKKIM AND EASTERN HIMALAYAS

CHAPTER I

HISTORY OF KIRAT KHAMBU RAIS

According to G.P.Singh, the word KIRATA has been possibly derived from Cirata or Cireta or Cirayita, also known as 'Kirata – Tikta' or 'Anarya – Tikta' - a bitter plant of the non – Aryans, grown in the lower regions of the Himalayas, which forms the country of the modern Kirantis or Kiratas. This is the name of a drug which was obtained from the Kiratas by the Aryans and used for medical purposes. It is also possible that the Kiratas themselves might have given the name to the drug, which was as bitter in taste as they were. (G.P.Singh:- Kiratas in Ancient India – 1990, pg. 96). The most popular Pali and Prakit form of an appellation 'Kiratas' used in Sanskrit and common parlance, is 'Cilata'.

It is not correct to state that the term Kirata was loosely applied to any hill folk, no doubt aborigines or used only for the primitive cave dwellers of the Himalayas, foresters and uncivilized or barbarian mountain tribes. It is also not a correct explanation that in Sanskrit literature, the term seems to have been used indiscrimately to designate only the border tribe of the Northern and Eastern Frontiers. Nor is it quite proper to call the Kiratas as a mere Himalayan mountaineers and to identify them only with the Kirantis, who once reigned over a large portion of Eastern Nepal.

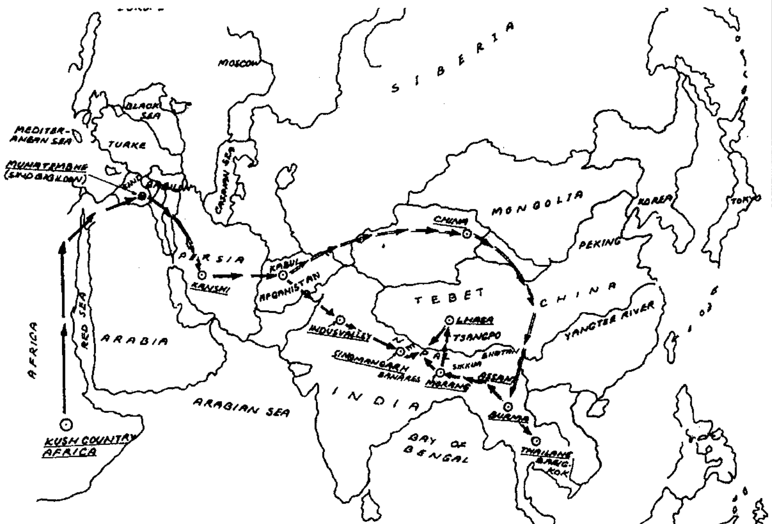
They were a distinct class of tribe having their settlement in the Gangetic Plains, the valley of Nepal, the hills and the mountains of Northern, Central and Eastern Himalayas, Vindhya region, etc. As a matter of fact, not only the non-Aryan mountain tribes possessing the rude culture, but also the degraded members of the Aryan stock leading the savage life of foresters were known as the Kiratas in ancient Times (G.P.Singh- Kiratas in Ancient India – 1990, pg.95).

"It is the consensus of opinion among Indologists that in Sanskrit the term 'Kirata' indicated the wild non-Aryan tribes living in the mountains particularly the Himalayas and the North Eastern areas of India who were Mongoloid in origin". (Kirat Jana Krit – S.K. Chatterji – Page 26-27)

Geographical Spread of the Kiratas/Kirats/Kirantis:-

Kiratas as a whole, as described in the classical literature can be identified with those tribes of North Western India, North Eastern India including Assam, Bengal, Tripura, Orrisa, Nepal, Sikkim, Tibet and Burma, who had settled in the plains, valleys, and hills between the epic age

MIGRATION CHART OF THE KIRATAS

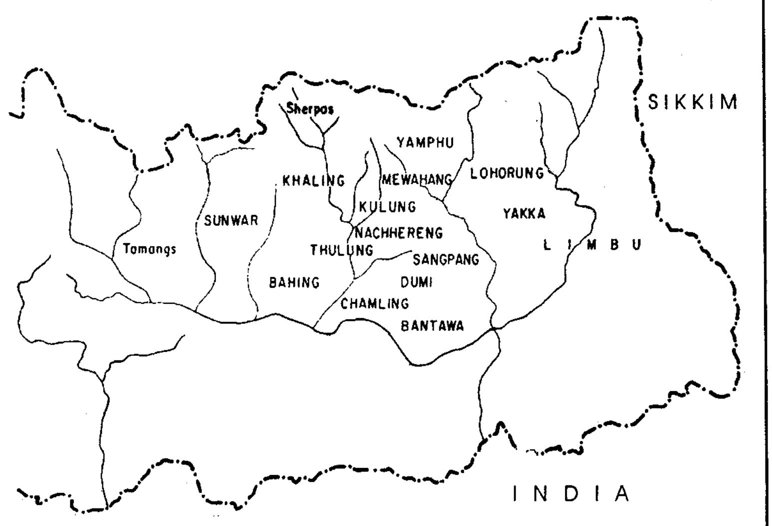


Source : *The Limboos of Eastern Himalayas and Sikkim, J.R. Subba, 1999*

and the 5th Century A.D. (G.P.Singh :- Kiratas of Ancient India – 1990, pg 113). The earliest recorded references including the appellation Kirata, occur in the Vedic literature, including the Samhitas and the Brahamanas, which were compiled roughly between 4500 – 1000 B.C. The hymns of the two later Vedic texts, the Sukla – Yajur Veda and the Atharva Veda throw light on their dwellings in the caves and mountains of the Eastern Himalayan region, there contacts with the Vedic Aryans, antiquity, etc. (G.P.Singh- Kiratas in Ancient India – 1990, pg.19).

It is generally held that the name Kirata was applied to the numerous fair complexioned or yellow coloured hill tribes of Mongolian race that lived in all parts of the Himalayas. But, on the basis of the description of the physical features available in the epics (Ramayana and Mahabharata) and the Puranas, we find that they were both yellowish and darkish complexion. Their general and physical characteristic show that they were a race of dwarfish stature with short arms, round face, projecting chin, broad head, flat nose, oblique eyes, etc, whose descendents are mountaineers and foresters

EASTERN NEPAL (TRIBAL LOCATIONS)



Source : *The Kulunge Rai-Charles Mc. Dougal 1979*

The Ancient Kiratis have not at all disappeared from the history of India. One section of them is geographically, racially and linguistically represented by the modern Kirantis in the Easternmost province of Nepal.[iii].

The Kirantis or Kiratas are no

doubt those, who were dwelling on the slopes of the Himalayas, especially in the Kirata – desa, on the mountainous country lying between the Dudh –Kosi and the Karki rivers in Nepal. They are generally identified by Khambu, Limbu and Yakha or Yakthumba tribes. They are believed to be the descendents of the ancient Kiratas of Nepal[11].

The Kirata tribe even at present occupy the portion of the Eastern Territory of Nepal between the rivers Sunkosi and Arun. The Nepalease traditions and chronicles or 'Vamsavalis' also proved that they were an offshoot of the tribes now living in that part of the country called Kirata – Desa.[12].

The Kiratis living between the Sapta- Kausaki and Sapta – Gandaki (representing ancient Nepal) have been correctly identified by Hodgson with classical 'Cirrhadae' (Kiratas)[13] with regard to the affinity of the tribes, thus conjoined, he observed that they are closely allied race having essential community of customs and manners and they all inter-marry. In the geretic term also, the Kiratas include the Limbus, the Ekas (Hodgson's Yakhas) and Rais and that in appearance and habit, they are all very much alike to each other. They are subdivided into various tribes. A vast majority of Rai- Limbu now found in Sikkim, Nepal and Darjeeling still call themselves as the Kiratis) (G.P.Singh- Kiratas in Ancient India – 1990, pg.113to 116).

Eastern Nepal and its neighbourhood have been appropriately named as Kirant country. The Kirantis or Kiratis inhabiting this country in the larger sense are sub – divided into three different parts– viz:-

a. Wallo Kirat or Hither Kirat from Sunkosi to Likhu river, including the Limbus, Yakhas and Lohorungs.
b. Majh or Middle Kirant from Likhu to Arun river comprising (Khambus), Bontawa, Rodong, Dungmali, Khaling, Dumi, Sampang, Bahing, Thulung, Kulung, etc.
c. Pallo or Further Kirant from Arun to Mechi river and the Singilela inhabited by (Limbus and Yakthumbas) Chourasya.

The old name of the Kirat country in Eastern Nepal was "Nao- lakh Kirat" The Khambus live to the Northern East of Jimdars and Yakhas, or the Southern spurs of the Himalayas. They are also associated with the fighting tribes of Nepal, who are placed under the head of Kirats.[14] Hodgson has placed the complex pronominalised language of Nepal under the head of Kirantis, which is connected with Tibeto- Burman group.

The most powerful section of the Kirantis who settled down in the valley of Nepal in ancient times, probably in the pre-Christian era, are identified with the present day Kiratas – i.e Kulung, Thulung and Yellung[15]. (G.P.Singh- Kiratas in Ancinet India – pg.116, 117).

Yallambar
The first Chieftan (King) of the Kiratas / Kirats

The Kiratas colonized the valley of eastern Nepal, North Videya, in sub Himalayan region after having conquered it and set up a dynastic rule in pre-Christian era in succession to the Abhiras, and ruled for about 29 generations from 400 B.C to 700 A.D. Their first Chieften (king) was Yalamber (Yalambara, Yellung or Yalambhang) and their Kingdom extended from river Trisuli in the west to the river Tista in the east.

Jitedasti (Jitadesi, Jitadastihang) was the seventh ruler of the dynasty. He was the most prominent among the early ruler of the dynasty. The king after being persuaded by Arjuna went to Kurushetra, took part in the war of Mahabharata on behalf of the Pandavas against the Kauravas and lost his life. According to Pt. Bhagwan Lal Indraji[16]. He had ascended the throne five hundred thirty six years later than the Gopala Dynasty –(i.e first ruler of Nepal). The Kiratas were finally dethroned by Abhira Gupta by the end of the Seventh Century A.D., which was the end of the dynasty but not the total annihilation of the Kirata population.) (G.P.Singh- Kiratas in Ancient India – 1990, pg.128,363,364,396).

The tribes allied to Kiratas of eastern Himalayas and the Gangetic Delta (the people of Khasi, Jaintia hills, the Garo hills, Sikkim and eastern Bengal) bartered 'tez pat' (Malabathrum - Cinnamomum albiflorum) with China for Chinese raw silk yarn, have been designated both as Basatae (Besadai) and Sesatai (Sesatae) in classical literature.
The import of the Silk from China has also been supported by J. Wame Edgar,[31] who extensively traveled in the frontier areas of Tibet and Sikkim. S.K.Chatterjee is also of the opinion that the Kiratas of Assam imported raw silk yarn and silk cloth from Thinai or China [G.P. Singh – Kiratas or Ancient India 1991, Page 210 to 213].

"The Kiranti people of East Nepal, more commonly known as Rai and Limbu, form together one of the largest single ethnic groups in Nepal, second only to the Tamangs. As numerous as they are, they are divided into a number of smaller 'thar' (clan) / Tribal units, the major two being Rai and Limbu. Rai is technically a term meaning 'headman' but has over the years become the popular generic term of reference for the entire ethnic group. The Rai in some districts are called 'Jimdar' or 'Jimi', in other areas 'Khambu' and in some places they are referred to by a particular 'thar' clan designation. In the course of time 'Rai' came to include the Yakha people, a third sub-division of the Kiranti.

Limbu people are addressed as Subba, a term which like Rai means 'Chief' or 'headman'. In general however, when speaking of the Kiranti people we refer to Rai and Limbu not Rai and Subba.

Northey and Morris have written concerning the origin of these terms when Shah Gurkhas conquered the Kiranti Tribes, the Gurkha Kings established some of the Jimdars as local rulers and gave them the title of Rai and Limbu headman similarly called Subba. In time the use of these names came to include whole groups and now we find Jimdars called Rai, Limbus called Subba and the Yakha people Dewans". (People of Nepal – Dor Bahadur Bista, Kathmandu – 1971 Page 32).

Physically, linguistically and to some extent culturally, the Rais and Limbus are related to the larger Mongoloid tribal people spread eastward through the sub-Himalayan region and hills of Assam (now North-Eastern States). Their movement into Nepal hills must be understood in relation to the spread of Mongoloid Tibeto-Burman speaking people throughout the eastern Himalayan region as a whole, which was probably gradual and effected by a series of displacements.

Rai tradition relates thet the first of the ancestral Kiranti entered Nepal's eastern hills through the Barakshetra gorge of Kosi valley, the natural gateway into the region through the Mahabharat Range which separates the hilly interland from the plains. According to Kulunge Rai version, there were three brothers Khambuho, Menho and Meratup. Once through the gorge the brothers separated, each taking his respective followers and set out independently as they penetrated up the different river valleys such as Sun Rosi, Dudh Rosi and Arun Rosi.

The term 'Khambu' often is used to refer collectively to the Rais. The relation between the Rais and Limbus is conceived of as that between the descendants of two brothers.

Certain writers (W.Brook, Northey and C.J.Morris, The Gurkha, London 1927) speak of a tripartite division of the Kirati into Khambus, Limbus and Yakhas but it is preferable to treat the latter simply as one of the tribes within the Rais; infact they refer to themselves as Yakha Rais." (The Kulung Rai – Charles Mcdougal – Page 3).

According to Eden Vansittart (Gurkhas – 1906-pg 99), the Kiratis include :-

I. Limbus or Yakthumbas

II. Rais or Khambus and Yakkas

By right it should apply to the Khambus (Rais) only. But as Khambus, Yakkhas and Yathumbas can and have intermarried for many generations, the three nations, although at one time quite separate have for all practical purposes, being fused into one and the same nationality, hence we find their manners, religious ceremonies, customs and appearances are almost the same. To the Khambus, Yakkas and Yakthumbas, therefore, might for all practical purposes be applied the term Kirantis.

Suniti Kumar Chaterjee in his celebrated work, Kirata – Jana-krti, makes an exhaustic survey of the ancient connotations of the word and those akin to it in the Indo – Aryan languages (1951:17-19). From what he has illustrated, the word 'Kirata' had a negative, subhuman or animal connotation. For instance, in the Vedic as well as other Indo – Aryan literature, this word referred to an ugly man, a wild man, a cruel and mean person, a corn chandler, a robber, a forester and the like. This is similar to Leo Kuper's remarks: 'dehumanization is the most common process in the characterization of subordinate races by a dominant race'.
There is little doubt, however that the Kiratas are of Mongloid origin. Chatterjee writes that Indologists agree that the Kiratas have a "non Aryan" or "Mongoloid" origin (1951:6). This is endorsed by Chemjong too, though he mistakes 'nationalities' for 'races' (1966:.4). While Chatterjee associates them with the northeastern Himalayas, he does not negate the view of Gopal Chandrea Praharaj who locates then in "Northern India" nor does he refute Jnanendra Mohan Das who claims that the ancient habitat was the "Eastern Himalayan tracts, including Sikkim and Bhutan, and Manipur and other adjacent tracts, which are exactly the lands of Mongoloid settlement in India" (Chatterjee 1951:18).

Milton Sangma, a noted historian, writes that the word "Kirata" refer to the "people now represented by the Mongoloid group inhabiting different parts of North East India" (1985:59).

In the classic work Kirata Janakrit (1951) by Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, he mentions the Limbus, Khambus, and the Yakkhas living "on the Indian side of the Himalayas, in Nepal and Sikkim" as Kiratas.

I.S Chemjong (1966) on the other hand includes almost all Mongoloid groups of Nepal like the Lepcha, Mangar, Gurung, Tamang, Sunwar and Hayu under the umbrella of word Kirata.
D.R.Regmi, in ancient Nepal, provides yet another view. According to him, "not all the people in Eastern Himalayas but only two of them, the Khambus and Limbus, are taken as Kiratas" (1969:16). However, he adds that the identification of a "section of Newars" with "the historical Kiratas as their own descendents may not appear far – fetched (1969:55). For instance, Northey and Morris write that the Dunwars and Thamis also legitimately claim to be Kirata (1974:215).

Northey and Morris write that the Kiratas occupied "the country right up to the eastern boundary of Nepal. Although the eastern frontier of Nepal is formed by the Singalela ridge, the country east of this, comprising theBritish district of Darjeeling, is peopled almost entirely by members of the Kiranti race, and large members of them are to be found still further east in the little hiss state of Sikkim" (1974:213). {T.B.Subba- Politics of Culture – A Study of the Three Kirata Communities in the Eastern Himalayas- 1994: page 22-35}.

As to the question about the origins of the Kirat Khambu Rais, they are the aboriginal tribes of this region. They are a Mongolian race and descendents of the Kiratas which have been described in the old Sanskrit texts particularly in the epics of Mahabharata and Ramayana (Martin Gaenszle- 1991- 4). They are described as a warring race inhabiting the north and north eastern Himalayas. They are described as uncout barbarians on the boarder of civilized India, living as gatherers of fruits, tubers and by hunting and fishing. They had "golden skin colour". There is an episode in the Mahabharata in which lord Shiva, disguised as a Kirata, turns against Arjun, but in the end, presents him with the miraculous "Pasupata" weapon.

With the establishment of tea gardens by the Britishers in the hills of Darjeeling in middle of 19th Century, a large number of Kirat Khambu Rais started working in the tea gardens but others still remained as farmers.

It is to be recorded that Kirat Khambu Rai also served the British army as soldiers, but after Independence a majority of them joined the Indian army. A major recruiting depot was in Darjeeling. After retirement many of these personals settled in various parts of India but especially in Sikkim, Darjeeling district of West Bengal and North Eastern States.

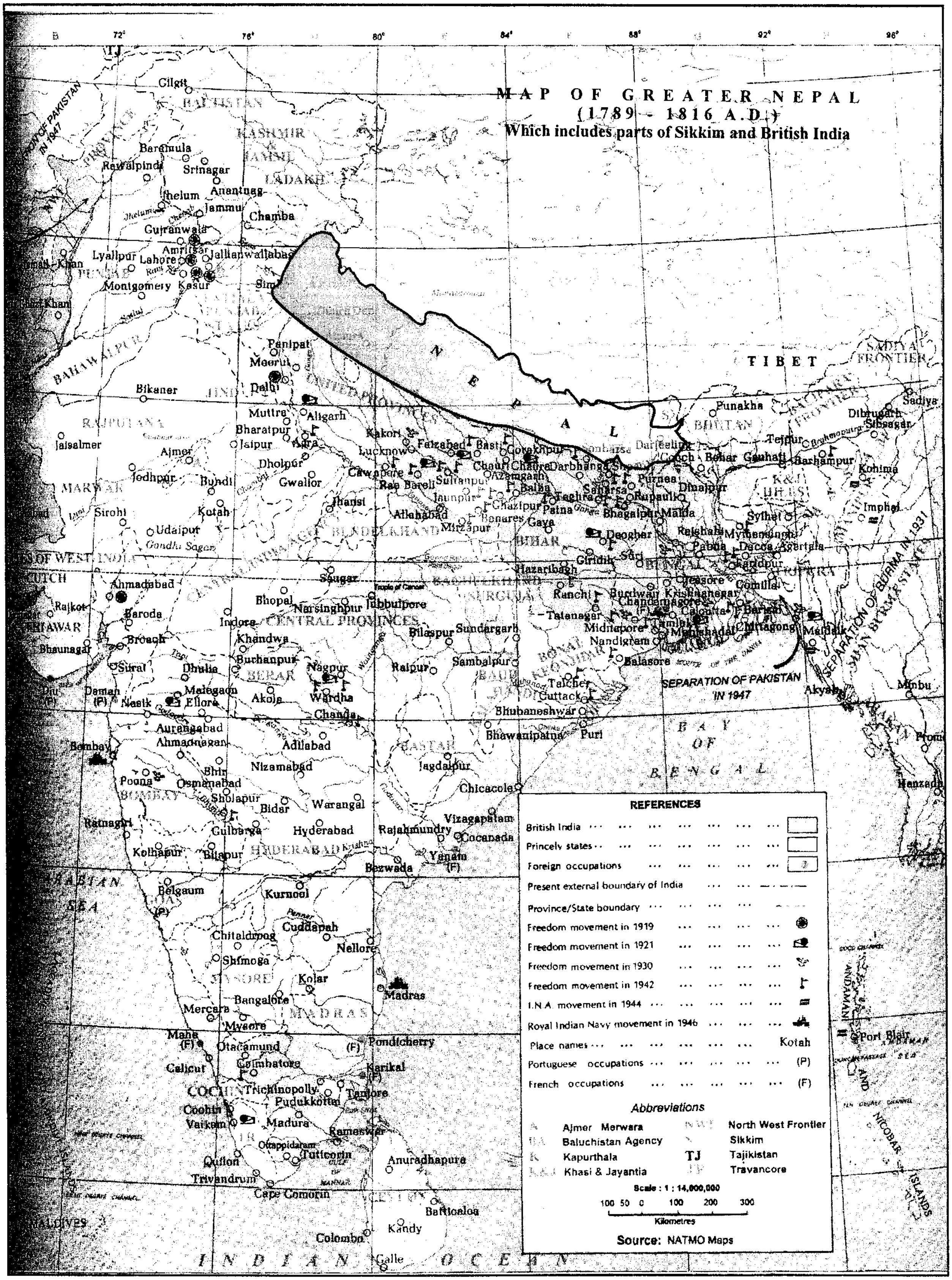
Brief History of Nepal:

Prithvi Narayan Saha, insatiable in his desire for fresh conquests, sent an army towards the east, in order to invade the country of the Kirantis, even menacing Sikkim. He died in 1775 and his son Pratab Sinha Sahi succeeded the throne. He waged war with Sikkim with varying success, though he did not succeed in forcing submission upon the country. After his death in 1778, Rambahadur Sahi became king. Under the command of Damodar Pande, the Gurkhas now turned their attention again to the east, and about the year 1787 an army penetrated Sikkim and occupied the Capital. Seeing their frontiers menaced, the Tibetans moved a force to check the forward onslaught of the Gurkhas, but the attempt was ineffectual, and in 1789 Sikkim was annexed to Nepal. Finding Tibet an easy prey, the Gurkhas crossed the passes into that country and plundered Shekkar Dzong.

Ever Since 1787, the Nepalese had been constantly seizing villages near or encroaching on the British frontier, and these constant acts of aggression, culminating in the seizure of some territories in the British district of Ramnagar and the murder of some police near Batoli, led to a declaration of war against Nepal in 1814.

In 1794, the Garhwalis were heavily defeated. With the conquest of Garwal, the Gurkha kingdom now extended from Bhutan to Kashmir, and from the high mountains of Tibet to the border of the British provinces of Agra and Oudh, now the United Provinces; and Bihar in the south.
The operations led by General Gillespie, General Martindell and General Marley against the Gurkhas met with disaster. It was left to General Ochterlony, however, to administer the final blow to the Gurkhas in February 1816 and retrieve the prestige that the many failures had lost to the British arms.

On 4th of March, 1816, the Treaty of Segowli was signed, by the terms of which Nepal lost Sikkim, Kumaon, Garhwal and all the Terai to the west of the Gandak river; thus reducing the county to its present limits. A prominent feature of this treaty was the conclusion of an arrangement under which three regiments of Gurkhas were raised for services under the British Government, and which constituted the nucleus of the present establishment of ten regiments. (W.B. Northey – The Gurkhas - 1927: 39-50).


MAP OF GREATER NEPAL
(1789 - 1816 A.D.)
Which includes parts of Sikkim and British India
NEPAL
TIBET
BAY OF BENGAL
INDIAN OCEAN
SEPARATION OF PAKISTAN IN 1947
REFERENCES
British India
Princely states
Foreign occupations
Present external boundary of India
Province/State boundary
Freedom movement in 1919
Freedom movement in 1921
Freedom movement in 1930
Freedom movement in 1942
I.N.A. movement in 1944
Royal Indian Navy movement in 1946
Place names
Kotah
Portuguese occupations
(P)
French occupations
(F)
Abbreviations
Ajmer Merwara
Baluchistan Agency
Kapurthala
Khasi & Jayantia
North West Frontier
Sikkim
TJ
Tajikistan
Travancore
Scale : 1 : 14,000,000
100 50 0 100 200 300
Kilometres
Source: NATMO Maps

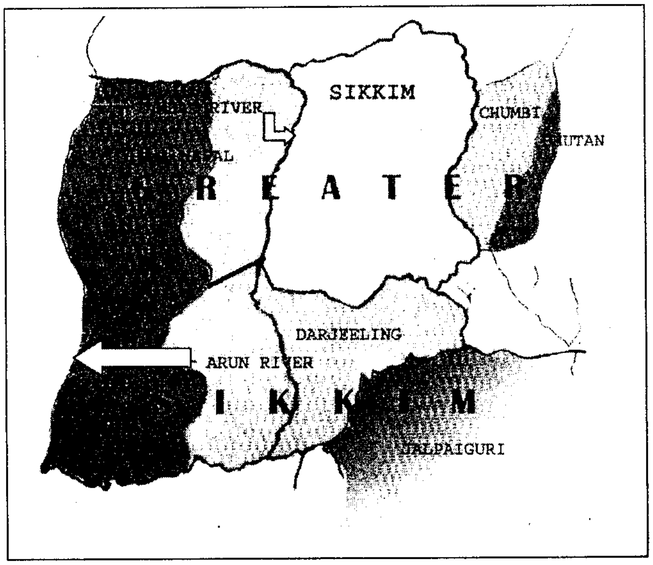
Brief History of Sikkim:

Of the early history of Sikhim a few doubtful glimpses reach us through the thick mist of Lepcha tradition. The Lepchas, or as they call themselves, the Rong-pa (ravine-folk), claim to be the autoch-thones of Sikhim Proper. Their physical characteristics stamp them as members of the Mongolian race, and certain peculiarities of language and religion render it probable that the tribe is a very ancient colony from Southern Tibet. They are above all things Woodmen of the woods, knowing the ways of birds and beasts, and possessing an extensive zoological and botanical nomenclature of their own. Of late years, as the hills have been stripped of their timber by the European tea-planter and the Nepalese agriculturist, while the Forest Department has set its face against primitive methods of cultivation, the tribe is on the way to being pushed out. The cause of their decline is obscure. There is no lack of employment for them: labour is badly wanted and well paid; and the other races of the Darjeeling hills have flourished exceedingly since European enterprise and capital have made the cultivation of tea the leading industry of the district. The Lepchas alone seem to doubt whether life is worth living under the shadow of advancing civilisation, and there can, we fear, be little question that this interesting and attractive race will soon go the way of the forest which they believe to be their original home.

The legendary account of the founding of the Sikhim Raj connects the establishment of settled government in that country with the great ritualistic schism in the Tibetan Church. Tradition tells how three monks of the dukpa or red-hat sect, flying from the persecution set on foot by the reforming party in Tibet, met after many wanderings at the village of Yaksun (Yuksom), under Kinchinjunga(Kanchanjunga). Here they sent for the ancestor of the Rajas of Sikhim, Pencho Namgay (Phuntsog Namgyal), an influential Tibetan then residing at Guntuk, and an alliance was formed, having for its object the conversion of the Lepchas to Bddhism, and the installation of Pencho Namgay as the Raja of the whole country. Both objects were attained. The easy- going Lepchas readily accepted the externals of Buddhism, monasteries and churches rose to preserve the memory of the missionary monks, and the descendants of the Tibetan settler are recognised to this day as the rightful rulers of Sikhim. The external policy of the petty princedom thus formed was determined by the manner of its creation. In the East religion is still a power, and all things take their colouring from the faith of the ruler. The chief of a barbarous tribe, raised to power by the influences, acknowledge the craving for ritual revived, and the hostility between the rival sects showed signs of abating, the religious and political bonds linking Sikhim with Tibet began to be drawn tighter. Doubtful questions of discipline and procedure were referred to Lhassa for the decsion of the Dalai Lama, and his mandate was virtually, if not statedly, admitted to be the final appelate authority for Sikhim Buddhists. While this religious rapprochement was going on, the Rajas of Sikhim were brought within the attraction of a civilisation far higher than their own. Wool, silk, tea, all the comforts and ornaments of life, came to them from Tibet; while intercourse with other countires was difficult. Small wonder, then, that their continual effort was to show themselves to be thorough Tibetans; that the Tibetan language came into use at their court, and that their chief advisers were drawn from Tibetan monasteries. In course of time this connection grew to be closer, and the last three Rajas have married Tibetan wives, and have held landed property and owned herds of cattle in Tibet. Such marriages introduced a new and important factor into Sikhim politics. Women brought up in the dry keen air of Tibet could not stand the moist

GREATER SIKKIM

(A Sketch Map)



White Area: SIKKIM TODAY
Shaded Areas: PARTS OF GREATER SIKKIM

Historians differ in the extent of Greater Sikkim. Like the Nepal historians who may not agree to Sikkim having ever possessed the areas around Arun and Tambar Rivers the Bhutan writers also disclaim loss of jurisdiction over parts of Ha region. Similarly the authority of Sikkim extending over Jalpaiguri is challenged and so is the sovereignty of Sikkim over Chumbi Valley. Sikkim historians naturally think otherwise.

Source : Sikkim & Darjeeling, Dr. Sonam B. Wangyal 2002

warmth of the Sikhim hills, drenched by the immoderate rainfall which prevails on the Southern slopes of the Eastern Himalayas. Their influence, coupled with the Tibetan proclivities of their husbands, promoted by the Nepalese invasion of the country, induced the Rajas to transfer the head-quarters of their Government to the valley of Chumbi, one march to the Tibetan side of the Jelap pass. The prolonged residence of the chief in Tibetan territory had the worst effect on the internal administration of the State. Abuses of all kinds sprung up, while redress was hard to obtain. Lepcha interests were neglected, and Chumbi became the Honover of Sikhim.

Meanwhile a still greater Power was being compelled, in spite of itself, to enter the field of East Himalayan politics. Already for thirty years the bigoted and warlike Hindus of Nepal had been harrying their peaceful Buddhist neighbours with cattle-lifting and slavetaking incursions. Before the year 1814 they had conquered and annexed the Terai or lower hills, lying between the Mechi and Tista rivers, and now covered by the valuable tea-gardens of the Darjeeling Terai. But for our intervention they would probably have permanently turned the whole of Sikhim and the hills south and west of the Tista into a province of Nepal. Peace had to be kept on the frontier, and the Government of India was the only Power willing or able to keep it. At the close, therefore, of the Goorkha war in 1817 we restored the Terai to Sikhim, and took such guarantees as were possible against a renewal of hostilities on our border. By the treaty of Titalya we assumed the position of lords paramount of Sikhim, and our title to exercise a predominant influence in that State has remained undisputed for seventy years, until recently challenged by the monastic party in Tibet.

Following our traditional policy, we meddled as little as possible in the affairs of Sikhim, and no further negotiations took place until 1834, when certain Lepcha malcontents, who had sought refuge in Nepal, made a raid on the tract ceded in 1817. Under pressure from us the refugees returned to Nepal, and the opportunity was taken by the Government of India to procure from the Raja of Sikhim the cession of the hill-station of Darjeeling and a small tract immediately surrounding it. Fifteen years afterwards Dr. Campbell, the Superintendent of Darjeeling, and Dr. (now Sir Joseph) Hooker, while travelling in Sikhim with the permission of the British Government and the Raja, were seized and imprisoned by the influential

monopolist, Namgual, populary known as the Pagla Diwan, or "mad Prime Minister" of Sikhim. This treachery was punished by the annexation of the entire Terai, and a large area of the middle hills bounded on the north by the Great Rungeet river. But Namguay, though ostensibly dismissed from office, continued to exercise great influence through his wife, an illegitimate daughter of the Raja. Criminals were harboured in Sikhim, and British subjects were kidnapped from our own territory for the purposes of the slave-trade between Sikhim and Bhutan. Having exhausted all ordinary forms of protest, the Government of India found it necessary in 1860-61 to order the occupation of Sikhim by force under Colonel Gawler, accompanied by the Honourable Ashley Eden as Envoy and Special Commissioner. Our troops advanced to the Tista, the Raja accepted the terms offered, and in March 8161 a treaty was concluded at Tumlong, the capital of Sikhim, which regulates our relations with the State up to the present day. Its chief provisions are the following : " Criminals, defaulters, or other delinquents" are to be seized and given up on demand, and may be followed by our police.The ex-Diwan Namguay and all his blood relations are for ever banished from Sikhim and excluded from the Raja's council at Chumbi. Trade monopolies, restrictions on the movements of travellers, and duties on goods passing between Sikhim and British territory, are abolished. Power is given to the British Government covenants to protect the working parties, to maintain the road in repair, and to erect and maintain suitable rest-houses for travellers. The slave-trade is prohibited. Our suzerainty in questions of foreign policy is recognised, and Sikhim undertakes not to cede or lease any portion of its territory or to permit the passage of troops, without our consent. Finally, the Raja " agrees to remove the seat of his Government from Tibet to Sikhim, and reside there for nine months in the Year." No more complete recognition of our supremacy in matters of external policy, and of our right to prescribe certain essential conditions of internal administration, could well be demanded.

The Peculiar position of Sikhim renders it impossible for us to ignore it as we ignore Bhutan, or to treat it on terms of comparative equality as we treat Nepal. Sikhim cannot stand by itself, and if we withdrew our support, it must ultimately fall either to Tibet or to Nepal. But for our treaty obligations the latter consummation would hardly be one to be deeply regretted, but it is difficult to see how it could be one to be deeply regretted, but it is difficult to see how it could be brought about peaceably. The Tibetan party would certainly try to hold the country for themselves; and although the stronger races of Nepal would probably win in the long run, the period of transition would be one of intolerable anarchy. Once let our hold be relaxed, and Sikhim would become the Alsatia of the Eastern Himalayas, and such a state of things would react most formidably on the security of life and property in the great European settlement of Darjeeling. (H.H. Risley - The Gazetter of Sikkim - 1928 P-i, xv, 27)

In the year 1642, Phuntsog Namgyal was consecrated as the first Chogyal of Sikkim. Yuksom was the first capital, from where he instituted the first central administration. He divided the Kingdom into twelve Dzongs (Districts), placed under a Dzongpon and council of twelve ministers.

Having consolidated his position, he engaged in subduing or winning over the Chiefs of the petty clans inhabiting the Limbuwan. He also signed a Historic Tripartite Agreement "Lo-Men-Tsong- Sum" with the Lepcha and Tsongs (Limboos). {Risley -1894}.

Tensung Namgyal (1644-1700), the second Chogyal of Sikkim married a Limbooni Princess, daughter of Limboo Raja Yong Yang Hang of Limbuwan.

During this period, Sikkim Kingdom included eastern parts of Nepal and Darjeeling district of West Bengal, parts of Chumbi Valley, Bhutan & Jalpaiguri [JR Subba – Limboos of the Eastern Himalayas and special reference to Sikkim, 1999-P-41}.

Going through history, one observes that the Kirat Khambu Rais, one of the descendents of the Kiratas, have been living in the Himalayan slopes of Nepal, Sikkim, West Bengal and North Eastern States from ages past.

Some parts of Nepal were under Sikkim once and likewise some parts of Sikkim were under Nepal. Similarly the southern part of Sikkim – (i.e. Darjeeling District of West Bengal) was taken over by the British Government and later by the Indian Government. Therefore, it is natural that the various communities living in Sikkim, Nepal and British India freely moved and settled in various parts of Sikkim, Nepal and British India. So it is not surprising that when the first Census was conducted in February 1891 in Sikkim, it was found that the total population of Kirat Khambu Rais to be 3,983 (Rai, Jimdar &= 2,020 and Khomboo = 1963), when the total population was just 30,458. {H.H.Risley – The Gazetteer of Sikkim – 1928, pg 27}.

Similarly, a century later, in 1991, the total population of Kirat Khambu Rais is found to be 25,420: out of the total population of Sikkim of 4, 50,000. {Linguistic Census 1991- Source Gopal Pd. Dahal, in Nirman – 1996 – P9}.
In 2001 the total population of Kirat Khambu Rais is 72,418: out of the total population of Sikkim of 5,40,493 {As per 2001 Census Report}.

SIKKIM

PHYSICAL FEATURES

Sikkim is the twenty second State of India. It is situated in the Eastern Himalayas and extends from 27 to 28 degrees north latitude and 88 to 89 degrees east longitude. Sikkim is bounded on the west by Nepal, in the east by Bhutan, in the north and north east by Tibet and on the south by the Darjeeling district of west Bengal. It covers as area of 7096 sq km and is divided into East, West, North and South districts. The headquarters of the districts are Gangtok,Gyalsing, Mangan and Namchi respectively. Gangtok is the capital of Sikkim.

It is a hilly state and about two thirds of the state remains snow covered throughout the year. The mountainous terrain consists of a tangled series of interlacing ridges, rising ranges after ranges, from the south to the foot of the wall of the high peaks of the Himalayas.

Mount Kanchendzonga is the highest peak and it lies to the north western side of Sikkim. Nathula and Jalepla passes are the main passes. Teesta and Rangeet are the two main rivers and the state is the catchment area of the head waters of these two rivers. The hills range from 300 m to 8,400m in altitude and therefore the climate of Sikkim varies from sub- tropical, temperate to alpine.

CHAPTER 2

NAME OF ETHNIC COMMUNITY/TRIBES

The name of the ethnic community / tribe is "KIRAT KHAMBU RAI"

ORIGIN OF WORD KIRATA/KIRAT/KIRANTI

The word KIRATA has been possibly derived from Cirata or Cireta or Cirayita, also known as 'Kirata – Tikta' or 'Anarya – Tikta' - a bitter plant of the non – Aryans, grown in the lower regions of the Himalayas, which forms the country of the modern Kirantis or Kiratas. This is the name of a drug which was obtained from the Kiratas by the Aryans and used for medical purposes. It is also possible that the Kiratas themselves might have given the name to the drug, which was as bitter in taste as they were. (G.P.Singh:- Kiratas in Ancient India – 1990, pg. 96). The most popular Pali and Prakit form of an appellation 'Kiratas' used in Sanskrit and common parlance, is 'Cilata'.

THE ORIGIN OF THE WORD KHAMBU

In relation to the Kathmandu valley, the Kirat country is divided from West to East into

I. Wallo Kirat or Hither Kirat from Sunkosi to Likhu river
II. Majh or Middle Kirant from Likhu to Arun river
III. Pallo or Further Kirant from Arun river to Nepal's eastern frontiers.

Middle Kirat also known as Khambuan has long been recognized as the land of the Rais, or the descendents of Khambuho. So the residents of Khambuan was known as 'Khambus' who later came to be known as 'Rais' (Charles Macdougal- The Kulunge Rai - 1979, pg 2-3).
The Khambus are also called 'Jimdars' though the term 'Rai' is almost universally used as title by them. Some Limbus in Nepal still refers to Rais as Khambus. It is not clear how the word ' Khambu' came into being. 'Kham' in Bantawa language of the Rais, which is most widely spoken and understood among them, means 'land'. Some trace the origin of this word to Kham province of Tibet. It cannot be precluded that a section of them came from Tibet's Kham province.

THE ORIGIN OF THE WORD RAI

The king Prithvi Narayan Shah, the ruler of Gorkha, having conquered the Kathmandu valley in 1768 had consolidated his position there, proceeded to expand his kingdom east ward. In 1773, he issued a proclamation to the Kiratas of the middle Kirat- Khambuan (i.e Khambus/ Rais) advising them that the Makwanpur principality no longer existed; he urged them to transfer their allegiance to him, for he is Makwanpur's successor by force of arms; promising them (Khambus) the security of their lives and property. He appointed local Kirati Headman, who was given royal commissions and the honorific title 'Rai' or 'Chief' to act as intermediaries between them and the state. Since the rapidly extended Gorkha kingdom lacked the administrative machinery to directly rule the newly conquered territories the local Headman were allowed a good deal of autonomy for their allegiance to the king (the Limbu Chieftains took the title of Subba). Rais are not a single tribe but rather a collection of tribes, exhibiting among themselves differences in language (dialect), culture and social organization although they do share a common culture base and have similar social structure. *(Charles MC Dougal-The Kulunge Rai-1979 page 7-12).*

It must be mentioned here that Rais are also known as "Khambus" or "Kirat Rais" or "Kirat Khambu Rais". They are the synonyms of the word "Rais"

Thus the word "Rai" in the above context is radically different in meaning from the words 'Rai', 'Roy' and 'Ray' in the context of Hindu Aryans living in different states in India. The Kirat Khambu 'Rai' is a very backward hill tribe (Community) living mainly in the Eastern Himalayan belt of Sikkim, Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Doars of West Bengal, the North Eastern States and Eastern Nepal. Kirat Khambu 'Rai' people are Mongoloid and not Hindu Aryans as suggested by some people. 'Kirat' is a Sanskrit word meaning 'a hillman living by hunting' and that is the meaning given to the Kirats by the Aryans in ancient times. When agriculture was introduced in India, they took to agriculture but the Kirat Khambu Rais are basically hunters and are very skillful archers. They are gatherers of fruits and roots and follow 'Jhum' cultivation-Slash and Burn cultivation.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

KIRAT KHAMBU RAI predominates in the State of Sikkim, Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Kurseong, Mirik and Dooars of West Bengal. A large number of Kirat Khambu Rai are also living in other North Eastern States and Eastern Nepal.

POPULATION

The Total Population of Kirat Khambu Rais in Sikkim is 72,419 (As per 2001 Census Report) In Sikkim, West Bengal and North Eastern States it is about 8 Lakhs.

Demographic Feature of Sikkim

For the first time a census was conducted in February, 1891 in Sikkim which divides the population as follows:

Race or caste	Males	Females	Children	Total
Lepcha (ST)	2,362	2,399	1,001	5,762
Bhutia (ST)	1,966	1,960	968	4,894
Limboo (ST)	1,255	1,159	942	3,356
Gurung	1,108	1,047	766	2,921
Murmi (ST)	801	778	1,288	2.867
Rai, Jimdar &	742	691	587	2,020
Khomboo	726	648	589	1,963
Kami	626	464	580	1,670
Brahman	521	372	521	1,414
Mangar	363	346	192	901
Chettri	303	253	273	829
Newar	240	183	304	727
Slaves	124	99	103	326
Dorzi	102	92	93	287
Miscellaneous	350	72	99	521
Total	**11,589**	**10,563**	**8,306**	**30,458**

Source: "The Gazetteer of Sikkim" 1928 page 27.

The linguistic classification of 1991 census Vs Race-wise census of 1891 could be roughly compared as follows:

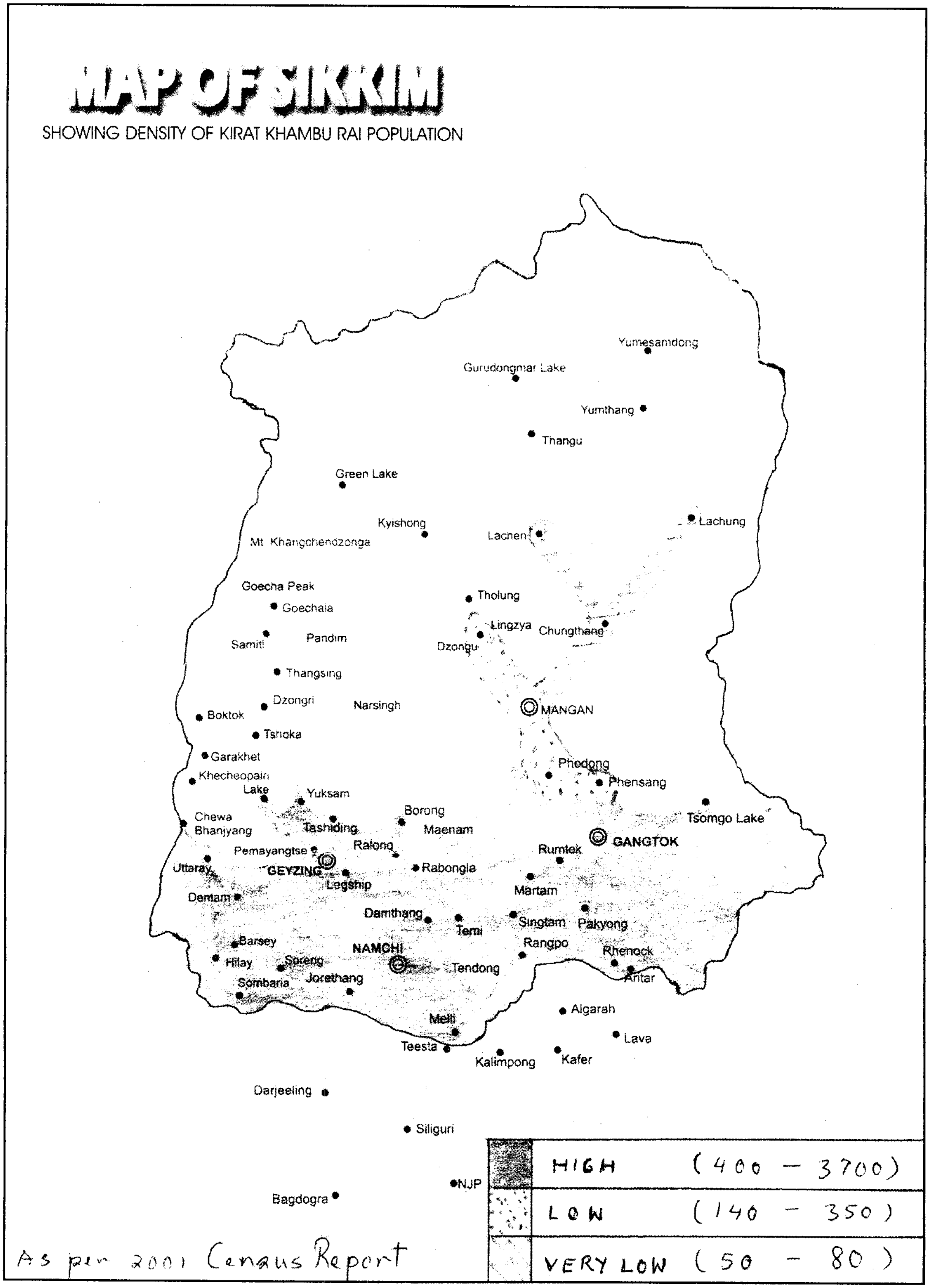
Rank	Race-wise Census 1891		Linguistic Census 1991	
First	Lepcha	18.93%	Nepali	18.11%
Second	Bhutia	16.00%	Rai	17.71%
Third	Nepali	13.81%	Bhutia	12.46%
Forth	Limboo	11.00%	Limboo	9.30%
Fifth	Rai	9.77%	Lepcha	9.26%
Sixth	Gurung	9.59%	Gurung	6.47%
Seventh	Tamang	9.39%	Tamang	5.78%
Eigth	Magar	2.95%	Newar	4.33%
Ninth	Newar	2.80%	Sherpa	4.24%
Tenth	Sherpa	-	Magar	2.61%

Source: Gopal Pd. Dahal, in.NIRMAN 1996 pp. 9.

CASTE-WISE DISTRIBUTION IN DIFFERENT CONSTITUENCIES IN SIKKIM -YEAR 1999

NO.& NAME OF THE CONSTITUENCY	SCHEDULE CASTE (SC)				SCHEDULE TRIBE (ST)			OTHER BACKWARD CASTE (OBC)							GENERAL							TOTAL
	KAMI	DAMAI	SARKI	MAJHI	LEPCHA	BHUTIA	SHERPA	RAI	LIMBU	TAMANG	MANGER	GURUNG	BHUJEL	SUNAR	BAHUN	CHETTRI	NEWAR	JOGI	SANYASI	THAMI	OTH	
1. YOUKSOM	102	42	0	0	973	1214	27	826	2957	80	2	400	8	8	198	738	58	0	18	0	14	7665
2. TASHIDING	278	45	0	0	1052	708	16	533	776	114	400	589	4	2	326	1054	44	0	51	0	20	6012
3. GEYZING	387	139	5	0	168	778	92	772	1593	167	43	824	11	36	780	1126	215	6	45	0	274	7521
4. DENTAM	151	121	43	8	735	82	812	871	1394	21	0	834	12	0	305	1169	350	0	0	0	24	6932
5. BERMIOK	199	80	51	0	307	332	270	547	1834	105	81	412	0	0	1006	1002	115	27	24	0	20	6422
6. RINCHENPONG	99	25	0	0	1060	872	131	1408	885	503	91	1457	22	52	242	381	41	8	3	0	45	7325
7. CHAKUNG	308	51	65	0	423	82	48	2357	622	680	826	1005	3	140	170	370	80	12	20	0	60	7542
8. SOREONG	316	93	9	0	207	75	313	654	2140	817	33	811	62	6	800	1533	480	24	16	0	93	8492
9. DARAMDIN	243	149	0	0	488	149	1989	447	2116	149	42	158	444	2	520	750	454	0	0	7	119	8266
10. JORETHANG	418	330	16	72	425	137	89	3745	664	914	548	297	62	86	600	683	485	59	50	2	1002	10684
11. RALONG	129	71	0	0	278	1379	616	1211	184	127	51	604	15	1	285	657	120	22	0	5	82	5857
12. [illegible]	170	[illegible]	0	0	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	322	2	17	92	[illegible]	[illegible]	0	2	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
13. DAMTHANG	238	175	0	0	314	685	605	2589	279	684	494	448	5	25	110	705	477	2	2	0	534	8372
14. MELLI	292	213	17	6	393	50	66	1889	205	610	357	338	169	19	563	1683	1176	6	27	0	263	8352
15. RATEYPANI(W-PENDAM)	633	258	54	85	554	11	44	1497	514	1420	244	387	40	48	854	1305	615	0	35	0	83	8691
16. TEMI-TARKU	170	212	25	0	517	544	995	661	530	661	48	1165	142	67	1041	1951	318	0	0	0	40	9114
17. C.PENDAM E.PENDAM	645	335	39	6	306	374	306	1076	315	1100	71	419	67	18	1622	1474	868	26	64	2	2089	11194
18. RHENOCK	342	221	29	3	335	383	53	415	476	342	61	238	149	72	1937	1166	762	0	134	0	432	7550
19. REGU	269	133	0	0	158	516	473	1493	130	422	207	1206	47	13	999	876	1105	0	9	37	208	8271
20. PATHING	221	93	1	0	415	1885	926	897	302	400	55	1139	18	15	1130	657	170	0	17	6	54	8550
21. LOOSING PACHEYKHANI	243	178	10	0	376	446	132	581	840	352	418	328	62	9	1395	1077	375	9	0	0	220	7049
22. KHAMDONG	360	157	9	0	523	550	300	1552	903	403	160	765	21	16	1269	1823	248	0	2	0	112	9175
23. DJONGU	34	12	0	0	3902	35	3	367	27	49	2	81	0	0	565	341	1	0	0	0	37	5456
24. LACHEN MANGSHILA	108	75	0	0	2110	3207	35	80	742	262	7	72	7	2	64	139	109	3	5	0	265	7294
25. KABITINGDA	28	29	2	0	1525	1698	533	144	130	181	35	70	6	1	181	400	92	3	0	0	76	5332
26. RAKDONG TINTEK	194	152	0	0	986	939	25	458	107	26	25	143	16	25	2204	1550	43	0	69	0	137	7109
27. MARTAM	639	218	13	8	574	1727	105	641	651	662	103	323	17	30	720	1178	545	0	97	13	115	8385
28. RUMTEK	486	431	3	0	620	1610	166	1007	220	606	154	529	55	56	1332	1809	541	0	7	5	710	10549
29. ASSAM LINGZEY	154	133	0	0	909	1504	283	1323	523	851	143	355	4	35	373	629	97	4	7	2	149	7459
30. RANKA	349	138	6	0	874	1657	223	1430	228	641	102	806	42	78	646	1138	357	0	74	23	117	8999
31. GANGTOK	675	401	5	0	822	2454	275	664	333	674	61	788	42	93	604	1093	650	4	113	3	3218	13002
32. SANGHA	0	0	0	0	932	2172	117	0	0	53	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3275
TOTAL VOTTERS	8918	4513	402	186	24016	29310	10776	33540	23380	14185	5052	17339	1554	977	22933	31441	11030	215	891	105	10580	252045
TOTAL POPULATION	19365	10330	850	402	51394	62723	23061	72419	50033	30358	11811	37105	3326	2091	49077	67284	23604	480	1507	225	22855	5,39,379

TOTAL POPULATION=5,40,493 (AS PER 2001 CENSUS REPORT)
TOTAL VOTERS = 2,52,046 (AS PER 1999 VOTER LIST)
RATIO =2:14


MAP OF SIKKIM
SHOWING DENSITY OF KIRAT KHAMBU RAI POPULATION
Yumesamdong
Gurudongmar Lake
Yumthang
Thangu
Green Lake
Lachung
Kyishong
Lacnen
Mt Khangchendzonga
Goecha Peak
Goechala
Tholung
Lingzya
Chungthang
Samiti
Pandim
Dzongu
Thangsing
Dzongri
Narsingh
MANGAN
Boktok
Tshoka
Garakhet
Phodong
Khecheopalri Lake
Phensang
Yuksam
Chewa Bhanjyang
Tashiding
Borong
Maenam
Tsomgo Lake
GANGTOK
Pemayangtse
Ralong
Rumtek
Uttaray
GEYZING
Rabongla
Legship
Martam
Dentam
Damthang
Temi
Singtam
Pakyong
Barsey
Rangpo
Hilay
Soreng
NAMCHI
Rhenock
Tendong
Antar
Sombaria
Jorethang
Algarah
Melli
Lava
Teesta
Kalimpong
Kafer
Darjeeling
Siliguri
NJP
Bagdogra
HIGH (400 - 3700)
LOW (140 - 350)
VERY LOW (50 - 80)
As per 2001 Census Report

TRADITIONAL OCCUPATION

Hunting, Fishing, Weaving, Gathering of wild fruits, tubers and wild honey, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Army and Tea Plantation were the main traditional occupation.

According to Prof Gangumei Kabui, in ancient times, the primitive men took to agriculture- earlier seasonal and later on permanent, and became archaic peasants. Subsequently with the urbanization of administrative centres, the peasants settled down to become a full fledged peasant; they produced for themselves their craftsmen and other functionaries rendering especial services for the urban centre. Also due to educational development and states support, they have become professionals, technocrats and bureaucrats. (Prof Gangumei Kabui – Tribal Situation in India- p1).

At present some of the Kirat Khambu Rais have taken up government service too.

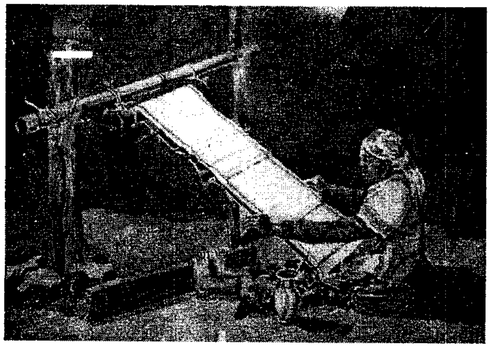
Hunting with bow & arrow (Talibey/Beli-phu)

Fishing in the river with a home made fishing net (Jal)

A Soldier in the Indian Army / British Army

Cattle Herders in front of the cow shed (Goath/Gaya)

Wheat cultivation and washing of wool by Rai ladies



A Rai Lady weaving cloth on a home-made weaving machine (Tan)

DATA ON THE NUMBER OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES IN VARIOUS STATE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Compiled From 38 Departments

Sl. No.	Communities	Selection IAS/IPS/IFS	Gazetted Grade I	Gazetted Grade II	Non-Gazetted	Class IV
1.	Scheduled Tribe	23	95	120	888	1115
2.	Scheduled Caste	2	7	15	143	450
3.	Bahun/Sharma	2	25	42	372	739
4.	Chettri	6	11	35	318	752
5.	Pradhan/Newar	7	17	44	245	301
6.	Gurung	-	8	17	180	524
7.	Mangar/Thapa	1	1	16	74	208
8.	Tamang	1	5	12	158	555
9.	Limboo	2	3	14	151	586
10.	Rai	1	12	28	81	789
11.	Sunuwar	-	2	9	50	23
12.	Dewan	-	2	3	5	2
13.	Giri/Sanyasi	-	1	1	16	44
14.	Jogi	-	-	-	2	13
15.	Thakuri	-	-	1	4	3
16.	Bhujel	-	-	1	10	29
17.	Bengali	-	1	4	16	1
18.	Marwari	1	2	4	10	5
19.	Bihari	3	3	6	20	15
20.	Madrasi	1	1	-	5	1
21.	Sweeper	-	-	-	-	5
22.	Keralian	-	1	20	20	15
23	Rajasthani	-	1	-	2	-
24.	Kashmiri	-	-	-	1	-
25.	Mohamedan	-	-	-	2	-
26.	Garwali	-	-	-	1	-
27.	Angloindian	-	-	-	1	-
28.	Thami	-	-	-	-	2
29.	Karmakar	-	-	-	1	6
30.	Oriya	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Report on OBC Commission 1998.

Class-wise Technical/Non-technical employees

Sl. No	Communities	Selection Grade			Gazetted Grade		Non-Gazetted	
		IAS	IPS	IFS	Tech	Non Tech	Tech	Non-Tech
1	Shcheduled Tribe	14	3	6	9	77	16	1
2.	Scheduled Caste	3	1	1	3	1	2	18
3.	Bhaun	2	-	2	8	15	10	37
4.	Chettri	2	1	2	8	24	13	50
5.	Newar	2	2	1	7	27	12	67
6.	Gurung	-	-	-	5	6	4	20
7.	Magar	-	1	-	-	1	2	15
8.	Tamang	-	1	-	7	-	-	22
9.	Limboo	1	1	-	1	2	3	261
10.	Rai	1	-	-	4	9	6	52
11.	Sunuwar	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
12.	Dewan	-	-	-	1	-	1	-
13.	Giri/Sanyasi	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
14.	Jogi	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
15.	Thakuri	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
16.	Bhujel	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
17.	Others	13	8	8	6	20	18	33

Source: Report of OBC Commission 1998.

CHAPTER 3

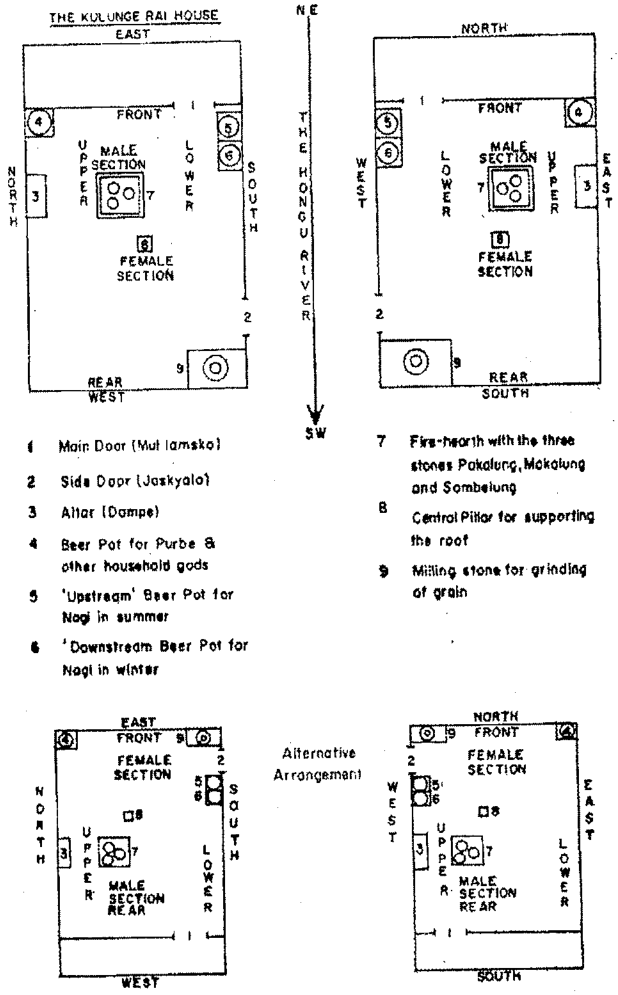
HOUSE

Kirat Khambu Rais House (Khim)
Photo Courtesy - Martin Gaenszle : Origin & Migration of Mewahang Rai

A Kirat Khambu Rai house (Khim) is usually made of stone plastered with mud. The house is thatched with local khahar (Phuksa) or siru (Luwei) or roofed with beaten bamboo (Chim) With few exceptions a household occupies a single dwelling. The house being rectangular in shape, it consists of two ends, 'front' and 'rear' from the two sides. The house consists of a ground floor, and the floor and walls of which are plastered, is used for living purposes. The upper loft of the same room is used for keeping grains in cylindrical bins formed by rolled up mats (gunri/ bhakari), and other household articles are stored. There is usually a veranda, with a separate lower, roof of its own, slanting down from the end of the house. The walls are usually made up of split reed - bamboo mats, fitted onto a framework of wooden upright poles. Some of the houses have walls made of stone plastered with mud.

There are two doors, made of heavy planks of wood. The main door (Mul lamsko) is situated at one end of the house, usually where the veranda is attached. The main door is not in the middle of the end wall but off center toward the lower, or side facing the river. On the same side toward its other end will be the second side door (Jaskyala). A small window is on the same side of the house as the door. The house is oriented in terms of the cardinal directions. North and East as auspicious, while south and west are inauspicious. The front of the house is oriented 'upstream' and the rear is oriented 'downstream' an important distinction for certain ritual purposes. The 'front' and 'rear' ends of the house is another dichotomy distinguishing the 'male' end of the house from the 'female', important for other ritual purposes, and in fact a distinction between' sacred' and 'profane'.

The male section extends from the main door to the far end of the fire hearth, and includes three sides of the latter. The fire hearth is located between the main door and central pillar, but much closer to the latter; it is closer to the upper side wall, away from the stream, then to the lower side wall, facing the stream. The hearth itself is a shallow pit lived with flat stones sunk into the ground with their sides protruding to mark off an area about nine feet square, having above ita raised drying rack, which is removable. In the firepit are 'three upright stones



Internal structure of Rai house

Source : The Kulunge Rai-Charles Mc. Dougal- 1979 page 63

embedded in the ground, (Samkhalung/Siltulung/Chula/Sutilung/three hearthstones), on which vessels are placed for preparing food, and which also have great symbolic significance, are thought to be repositories of supernatural powers and play an important part in house hold rituals. Above the fire hearth, upper wall, is a small shelf, forming an alter (damphe) on which offerings are placd and ritual paraphernalia kept.

The Male section:

The male section of the house is divided into two parts. The area between the fire hearth and the near upper wall facing away the river us 'upper' (masum), while the remainder, or larger part extending from the upper, masum edge of the fire hearth to the lower watt facing the river is 'lower' (lamichini). The upper side is especially sacrocant, where Purbe, the household god and personnel gods and goddesses of the household reside. Females are at no time allowed to enter the masum, nor may their belongings are put there. It is thought that women entering this area might cause them to be barren.

The 'upper' and 'lower' in a more important sense is the distinction between 'we' and 'they' between in- group and out-group. Where the 'upper' section of the house is the domain of the house owner the' lower' section is for guests and visitors. This division is an important one during marriage ceremonies; the seating arrangement is usually clear cut in practice as well as in theory. At the bride's house, the bride's clansmen sit on the 'upper' side of the fire hearth, while persons of the groom's party sit on the' lower' side. The situation is reversed at the groom's house. While performing a rite on behalf of the household, the householder, himself or a ritual specialist engaged by him, sits on the 'upper' side of the fire- harth. The only exception is for a funerary rite, when the ritual practitioner sits on the 'lower' side.

The Female section:

The female section of the house is larger than the 'male' section. Though the woman is forbidden to enter the 'masum' however, she is allowed to enter or occupy the 'male' section. She performs most of her domestic tasks in the 'female' section of the house. While preparing food over the hearth she normally sits on the side adjoining the female section. The milling stones Uhato) for grinding maize and other grains are always located along the end wall of the

female section of the house on the 'lower' side. Also during the period of ritual impurity following childbirth, the women and her baby occupy a straw covered place in the 'female' section of the house on the 'lower' side facing the river.

The dichotomy between' upper' and' lower' to some extend cross cuts that between 'male' and' female', 'upper' is associated with 'male' and' lower' with 'female'. The most 'sacred' portion of the house is the 'upper' part of the 'male' end; the most 'profane' portion is the 'lower' part of the 'female' section.

Right is associated with 'male' and left with 'female'. Ideally women should eat with I eft hand, whereas m ale eat with the right hand. While performing rituals, the householder sits on the right and his wife on the left. When standing side by side during parts of marriage ceremony, the groom should be on the right and the bride on the left. We have noted that the main door is the 'male' part of the house, and that the side door is in the 'female' part. Auspicious occasions such as weddings, the main door is used, the marriage party enters the house by the main door and for inauspicious occasions, like funerals, the side door is used. Before taking the corpse outside for burial, it is carried around the fire- hearth in a counterclockwise direction, and is removed from the house through the side door. Sleep- a person always should sleep with hisl her head towards the north or east, never toward the south or west: the head always should have an 'upper'orientation and never be pointed toward the river. By contrast, during the funerary rite, the corpse is always placed along the end of the house which faces south least, with its head pointing toward the river.

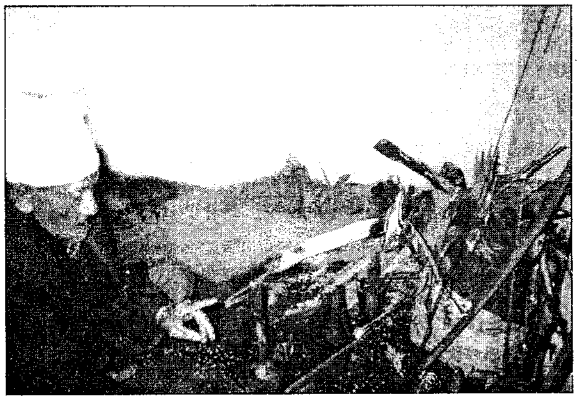
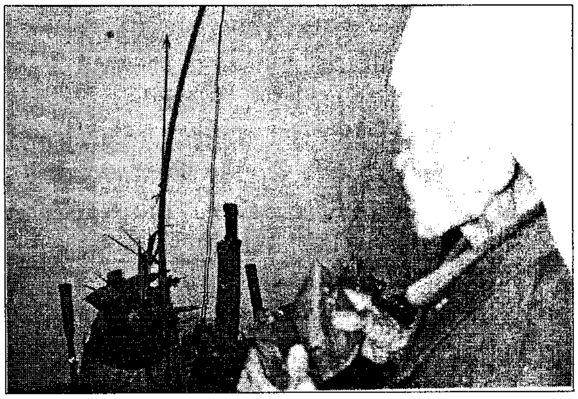
The following sets of oppositions are associated with the dichotomy between 'upper' and 'lower': upper: lower; hill: river; auspicious: inauspicious; clockwise: counter - clockwise; main door: side door; right: left; male: female; we: they; our: others; Gods: Gods; North: south; East: West.

It is thought that during the summer the gods are present in the high peaks upstream, whereas during the winter they are in the lower valleys downstream. The Rais have an important series of rituals associated with Nagi, the water serpent. In the front of the house, along the 'lower' wall are two adjacent stands for placing large earthern pots for beer. Rites are performed for the god Nagi during the summer (ubhauli), when Nagi is up in the mountains, a jar filled with beer (di) for ritual offerings is placed on the 'upstream' stand, rites of the same series are performed during the winter (udhauli), when N agi is lower down in the valleys, the jar is placed on the 'downstream' stand. These beer stands are known as 'dichardi'.

During rites for health and well being of the household performed by shamans, then the latter exorcises malignant supernatural agencies for the benefit of all or part of the hosehold members, the latter sit in a line in the front portion of the house, facing the front end wall. However, a corpse is always placed at the rear end of the house, along the rear end wall.

Samkhalung/chula/situlung/suptulung/sutulung: (The Three Sacred Hearthstones)

The 'front' and 'rear' are also mediated by the ternary division of the three hearthstones. The latter form a triangle, with the apex toward the 'lower' side and the base toward the 'upper side'. The apex stone is 'pakalung' and the two stones forming the base are 'makalung (toward the rear end of the house) and 'sombelung' (toward the front end of the house). Pakalung brings good things, such as health, crops and wealth, Makalung and Sombelung drive away bad things, such as famine, disaster and death. For all household rites a libation of beer is ceremonially poured on these stones from a special gourd container called chingna/ cindo/ wabuk/ sakewa.

Mangpa (Rai Priest) in front of Samkhalung performing Mang (Pitri Ritual)

Daplo Kuim: Libation of millet beer (Hengma) being poured from Wabuk, along with first produce of the land on the Samkhalung

This ritual act, known as daplo kuim, the rais consider one of the most ancient and most powerful parts of their ceremonial heritage. A person who makes the offerings is the senior male member of the house holder's clan who is present; for some rites the householder himself may do 'Daplo Kuim'. Seated in the masum part of the house behind the hearth, the officiant first pours beer from the chingna on to pakalung (apex), then makalung, and last on sombelung, that is clockwise direction. (for funerary rites it is done in a counter - clockwise direction). This is repeated twice. After three libations have been poured on each stone, directions are reversed and the procedure changed. Beer is pured on sombelung and then a trail of beer is dripped around behind sombelung in the directions of the 'front' part of the house; finally, beer is poured on pakalung, in the lower part of the house, and then rising, the officiant takes the chingna from palalung directly to the dampe altar on the wall behind the hearth, in the 'upper' part of the house, and pours a libation of beer on to the altar itself. The beer trailed from sombelung and makalung toward the 'rear' and 'front' sections of the house respectively drives away evil forces from those quarters; the beer transferred from paklalung to the dampe altar brings prosperity and good health. Note the opposition of sombelung and makalung, sharing the same function to pakalung, having a complementary one. (Charles Mc.dougal-The Kulunge Rai - 1979-page 67)

CHARACTERISTIC OF THE KIRAT KHAMBU RAIS:

Kirat Khambu Rai Males

Physical Appearance:

According to Sueyoshi Toba- (Rites of passage -An Aspect of Rai Culture-1992- page 8,9) the Kirat Khambu Rais have short robust body, broad cheeks, flat nose, thin and pointer whiskers (Baagjunge). Their eye slit is narrow, skin is lighter in colour, hair is black and usually stiff. They have dark eyes; scanty beard and the muscles of their legs are well developed, being mountainous people.

Kirat Khambu Rai Female

Disposition / Character

The Kirat Khambu Rais are characterized by:

1) A positive and open attitude towards life. When they want to do something they do it without hesitation. This does not mean that they are lawless, but they show a free man's behavior in all their actions.

2) The Kirat Khambu Rais are an intelligent people, and this intelligence is usually expressed in a practical rather than a philosophical approach to life.

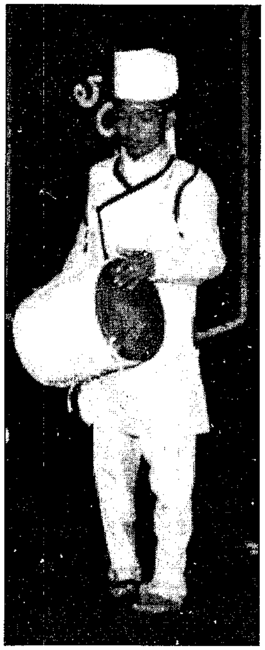
3) According to Northy (1974:42), the Kirat Khambu Rais as a people are brave and courageous. Young Kirat Khambu Rai men have proved their worth in the armed services of Britain, India and Nepal. They serve their time with distinction and are not infrequently promoted to higher ranks.

4) The Kirat Khambu Rais are well mannered, cheerful and amicable. When intoxicated, however, they, like people of all races, do not feel the pressures of social control, and aggressive behaviour may be manifest.

5) The Kirat Khambu Rais are honest and generous. Their generosity is especially evident in their willingness to share food and drink.

6) Their sense of humour, which is well developed, is also reflected in their interactions with other people.

DRESS



Kirat Khambu Rai Male Dress

The dress of **Kirat Khambu Rai Male** comprises of head gear *(Feta/Pagari/Sayabung),* Shirt *(Dawra/Lockchham),* Pant *Suruwal/Langsup),* Sleeveless coat made of stinging nettle plant fiber, *(Chhakchha/Fenga),* Waist Band *(Patuki, Chakchhinma),* A large knife *(Khukuri/Dabhay/Betho).* Usually footwear was not commonly worn.

Kirat Khambu Rai Female Dress and Ornaments

Kirat Khambu Rai Female: Shawl *(Mujetro/Burkey/Tangdoma),* Blouse *(Cholo/Yamlung),* Sari *(Guniu/Tamphay),* Waist band shawl *(Hembari),* Waist Sash *(Patuki/Chhakchhima),* every Kirat Lady used to keep Khurpi (small curved knife), Pig hair round brush *(Kuchi),* Musical Instrument *(Binayo/ Dong), Machunga (Dotengwa),* Hair Band *(Lachha/Tangkhi). They weave their own clothes on Tan-(wooden weaving machine) from cotton, wool and fibres made from the bark of stinging nettle (Sisnu/Ganam).*

Ornaments:

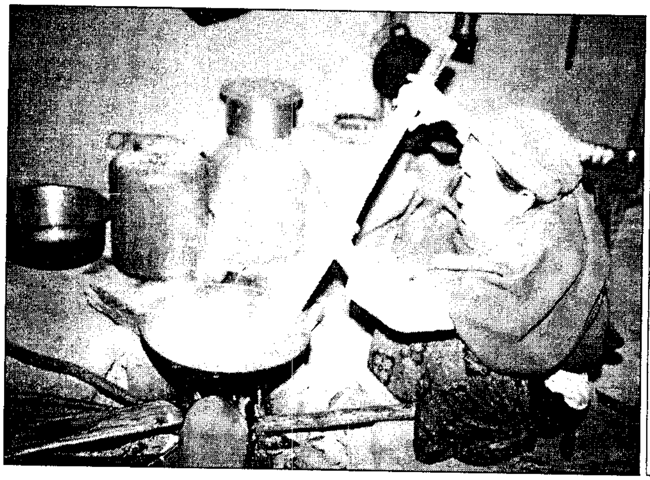
a) Male ornaments: Gold necklace *(Kantha/Lolopot)* and ear rings *(Kundal/Phingrang).*

b) Female ornaments: Head ornament *(Samyabong), Sirbandi (Chomdup)* Gold necklace *(Kantha/Lolopot),* Gold Necklace *(Nawgerdi/Bhitat),* Nose stud and nose ring *(Dhungri-Bulaki / Nathen Nabit), Chandrahar (Rupawa), Chura, (Chhuklung), Rejee (Yanchang), Hansuli (Phetlung),* Flat gold earrings *(Chheptesum/Nadup), Tilhari (Surem)* hand and ankle rings (silver*kalli /Langkung).*

Kirat Khambu Rai Male & Female in their traditional dress

FOOD

Since Kirat Khambu Rais are primarily agriculturist, in the morning before going out for work they take fried *popcorn/soybean/tubers* and fermented millet beer *(Jand/Hengma/Umma/Arakha)*. At the daytime they take *Dhero (Jagulo/Yuwa)* - cookedcorn/millet /buckwheat dough, with *Gundrunk* (a kind of fermented vegetable soup) and *Kalo Dal* (pulses), along with few pegs of *Arakha* (home made wine). At dinner, Kirat



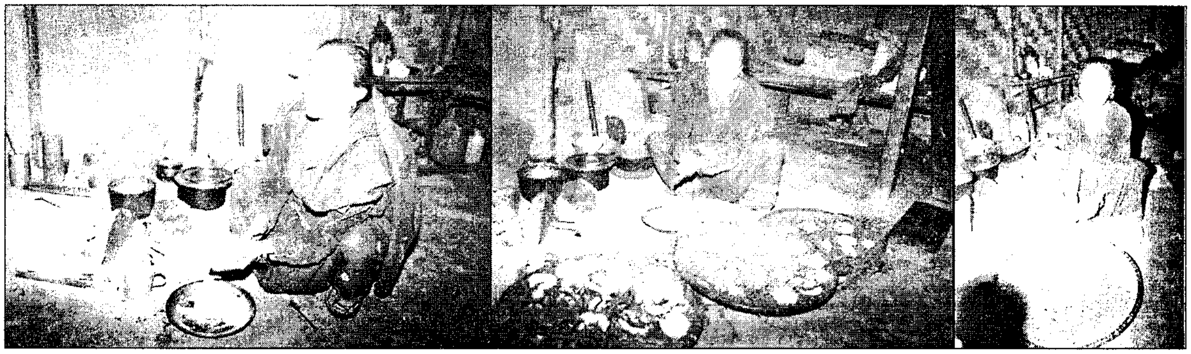
Preparation and eating of Dhero (Jagulo/Yuwa)

Photo Courtesy : Mr. Nakul Das Rai

Sipping of millet beer (Jar/Hengma) from a Bamboo container (Tongba/Thokla)

Plucking of stinging neetle leaf (Sisnu/Ganam)

Frog (Man Paha/Lusa/Dhelu)



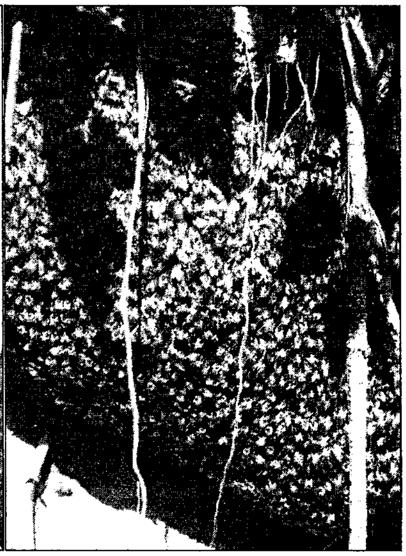
Preparation of Marcha (Yeast) used for fermenting cooked millet in order to produce millet beer (Jard/Hengma/Umma)

Hive of Wild Bee (Aringal), was harvested from a hollow tree trunk. Larvae/Grub of the wild bee being cooked and eaten

Khambu Rais love to eat pork meat *(Baksha),* Beef (*Pisha*) with corn millet *dhero* or roti. Fermented Soybean *(Kinama/Goyong),* Stinging nettlesoup *(Sisnoo/Ganam),* Bamboo shoot *(Tusha/Lim),* Wild flowers *(Nakima/Daimbung),* insects *(Rato fatengra/Grasshopper,* Grub/Larvae of wild Bees) Frogs, *(Man Paha/Lusa/Dhelu)* Deer *(Mirga/Khis/Chaketosa)*, Porcupine *(Dumsi/Khas)* and Tubers *(Tarul/Sosruksa)* are also relished. Homemade wine is a must drink before good night sleep.

Pig slaughtered and disected out

Pork & Beef ready for consumption



Bhir Mauri (Wild bee)

Preparation and eating of Wachippa

According to Mr. C.M. Khambu, one of the delicacies of Kirat Khambu Rais is *Wachippa / Damlappa / Tito.* This is of two varieties:

a) *Non-vegetarian: Titey (Wachippa) :* The outer feathers of the fowl is plucked, the inner down feathers is burnt and collected in a dish. This *titey* powder, along with the cut pieces of the chicken and rice is made into a *khichery.* This is *Wachippa,* which must be eaten by all family members and guests during *Mang (Pitri ritual),* ancestor worship and other special occasions.

b) *Vegetarian: Titey (Damlappa / Nakhilbung) Hallalumbey* flower / Bitter flower is collected, powdered and mixed with cooked rice and served to the family members and guests.

Dhiki for pounding paddy into rice

Jhato (Chumbo) for milling maize, millet etc.

Okhli (Chipu) for pounding millet, paddy etc.

CHAPTER 4

SECT : *THAR / SUBGROUP*

{Kirawa Khambu Rodungchio Tharchi}

Athpahare	Kulung	Khaling	Chamling
Chaurasaya	Chinthang	Thilung	Thulung
Dungmali	Dumi	Nachereng	Puma
Bantawa	Baying	Yaku	Yakha Dewan
Rungchengbung	Lambichong	Lohorung	Waling
Sangpang	Sotang	Mewahang	

The above 23 thars are the main subgroups / thars but at present there are more than 50 such subgroups/thars, speaking different dialects (Prof. W. Winter-Linguistic Survey of Nepal-Origins and Migrations of Mewahang Rai-by Martain Gaenszle-1991, P.3).

To get a full and really correct list of Rai tribes and clans would, I believe, be impossible, as numbers of fresh clans are continually being added. Any peculiarity of manner, speech, or habit, is apt to give a nickname which becomes a clan. The fact of living in any particular district, or marriage into any particular clan, often causes the creation of fresh clans:-

AMBOLA.

Ambole.	Lingkim.	Sam.	Serum.
Kaptale.	Lulam.		

AMCHOKE.

Bünche.	Hangkem.	Mangphang.	Tangluwa.

ATPAHARE.

Angtipe.	Hangpa.	Kingdam.	Manapu.
Chiling.	Kintange.	Langsua.	Rudua.
	Sikten.		

BAINGIYE.

Baihim.	Chektopa.	Rumdali.	Tulacha.
Baingiye.	Nechale.	Susto.	Tunime.

BANTAWA.

Amchoke.	Desāmun.	Khamle.	Pankhole.
Aripang.	Dibet.	Kemyung.	Pungchehang.
Babak.	Diem.	Kimdim.	Rāhadung.
Bānu.	Dikupa.	Kowa.	Rājālim.
Bārālamcha.	Dilpāli.	Kumara.	Rājātang.
Bārālung.	Dilungpa.	Logum.	Ruchibo.
Bilpāli.	Dungmāli.	Lungum.	Rungmangcha.
Bokhim.	Hangchen.	Makere.	Samewa.
Bungchen.	Hankim.	Mangpang.	Sāmsong.
Bungchio.	Harimāna.	Nācha.	Sangpang.
Butangpyer.	Kangmancha.	Nāchāring.	Sohoyongwa.
Chināmkhole.	Katonjeli.	Nehang.	Suthunga.
Darpāli.	Kāũng.	Newang.	Tanglukwa.
	Waling.		

CHAMLING.

Bādācha.
Bārāthare.
Bijahi.
Birājacha.
Boenge.
Boyoncha.
Buchināmcha.
Bumācha.
Bumakāmcha.
Butepāchha.
Chalipāchha.
Chamdacha.
Chāmling.
Chāmlingcha.
Chāripāchha.
Chibringgie.
Chipincha.
Darbalicha.
Dibungcha.
Dibungle.
Dikulikpa.
Dikulipachha.
Dilpāchha.
Dongdewachhho.
Dorkalicha.
Dorwali.
Dungpachha.
Dungwacha.
Gwāpācha.
Haideungcha.
Halesecha.
Harasuchha.
Homāicha.
Homdemcha.
Homewacha.
Hongdar.
Horapacha.
Howagbungcha.
Kalencha.
Kerasingcha.
Kerescha.
Kerupungcha.
Koasangcha.
Kolapāchha.
Kotwacha.
Kraicha.
Kuasangcha.
Lapioncha.
Likuācha.
Lipocha.
Lungbocha.
Lunguma.
Maidangcha.
Malcha.
Melekungcha.
Malepuncha.
Mehrācha.
Mennucha.
Molocha.
Mompolancha.
Mūkumorācha.
Nabuchācha.
Nambongcha.
Nāmrangnācha.
Nenuncha.
Nināmucha.
Nirpāli.
Nomanācha.
Palangmocha.
Patisingsua.
Pitrangcha.
Porungcha.
Pulomocha.
Pumbocha.
Puntepāchha.
Radolicha.
Rakocha.
Rannocha.
Rasungnācha.
Rātāhicha.
Ratocha.
Ringalungcha.
Rolecha.
Sahmiongcha.
Sakoramcha.
Sapsanamcha.
Sasarkhali.
Saterongcha.
Seralongcha.
Silongcha.
Singdacha.
Songdolcha.
Songpang.
Tabre.
Tabrehungcha.
Tamuhācha.
Thunglingyie.
Tigua.
Tilung.
Waboche.
Wālinggricha.
Wātancha.
Yongchen.
Yungcharcha.
Yungcher.

CHAURASIA.

Brankemcha.
Gaortoke.
Hātāchho.
Mopocho.
Saipacha.
Yungpho.

CHINAMKHOLE.

Chināmkhole.
Diem.
Hangchen.
Kamiungka.
Koile.
Kukuli.
Siptanka.

DILPALI.

Bano.
Birangcha.
Bokkhim.
Chināmkhole.
Danwāli.
Egwai.
Homangi.
Issara.
Kengyongma.
Mangbahang.
Mukārām.
Ramangcha.
Rangchin.
Ripabung.
Ruchenbung.
Sowāli.

DUNGMALI.

Chāngcha.
Charangmule.
Chokhang.
Chuwipang.
Dehatpang.
Dewipang.
Hangbang.
Lungwem.
Nāko.
Namchehang.
Pangwa.
Waipang.

DUMI.

Bolam.
Dimacha.
Dumi.
Hādi.
Hajuru.
Hodicha.
Holoksa.
Horosong.
Karbu.
Makpali.
Munsupa.
Rāngkāsur.
Rātku.
Sadmali.
Saracha.
Satma.
Wolukhpa.

HADERAMA.

Puma.

HĀTUWĀLI.

Bakhsibir.
Chora.
Dhunkhur.
Ewai.
Gaura.
Hangkim.
Harjitar.
Hangsing.
Kamleh.
Kaon.
Lengma.
Lengnuk.
Pangphu.
Sampuktar.
Sāngsun.
S'oyong.

HOCHĀTOL.

Dawali. Esara. Hochātol. Rimnisigang. Saimalungang. Waisūr.

HENGWA.

Chabungie. Hengbang. Ilungbang.

JUBILE.

Hasticha. Lapachio Laplache. Reamo.

KALING.

Bālāling. Baralungie. Beraluch. Bolcruch. Chelos. Chuchimile. Chulus. Dhanragāole. Dimile. Dotam. Hādi. Hangkula. Halakso. Hangkrap. Jubale. Jubungie. Kaku. Kastawās. Lamrus. Lātos. Lomarija. Maikhawas. Makekra. Mārsoale. Miras. Mūlaku. Pararus. Pāyati. Phalles. Pulāli. Rajāli. Rapcha. Ratdāli. Teptāli. Wāpchāli.

KAPLE.

Mewabang.

KESUNGE.

Chamcha. Chaurāsia.

KIMDUNG.

Kimdung. Langle. Sakwa.

KOWE.

Dherun. Howadhukku. Sungdel. Manchupa. Sebopho.

KULUNG.

Bālākhang. Bārāmis. Barsi. Bikhang. Bokhang. Chacharlung. Chāmling. Charipa. Deoram. Ghaktalus. Goduhoj. Haringbu. Hobermis. Hochātol. Hodebu. Hongelu. Horingbung. Kalinge. Kubiti. Mantaibung. Mopocho. Nāchiri. Nagerabung. Nawāpochon. Pankere. Pelmangie. Pidimo. Pidisāi. Pilāmat. Pilmonge. Pupāchos. Rinhang. Rubiti. Rukupa. Saetis. Sāji. Sambewa. Saprung. Satang. Sotangie. Tāmcha. Tamehang. Thetos. Tomnām. Walakam. Wāling. Yesas.

LINGKIM.

Katwāra. Langdappa. Maringa. Pākmācha. Rājbansa. Subah.

LINGMUK.

Ewai.

LINGTEP.

Chiktang. Lingtep. Pulung. Sangwārekeng.

LOHORON.

Alā. Biksik. Bogoeza. Changka. Dehden. Ghosir. Hedangna. Kaiasong. Lamphusong. Mangdenwa. Newahang. Ramsong. Riwahang. Songsawa. Tingwa. Umrong. Yamdamsong. Yampho. Yangkrong. Yungbang.

RĀIS.

MANGLIWALI.

Echongma.
Naika.
Samba.
Tamku.

NACHARING.

Emali.
Kubitis.
Paitātis.
Rakali.
Rēgu.
Rūkupla.

NECHALI.

Baing.
Deb.
Gelarcha.
Namersacha.
Nandesar.
Ralecha.
Randāli.
Sechācha.

NAWAHANG.

Bahinge.
Chaiahang.
Chalpāchawa.
Degāmi.
Dehchang.
Ketra.
Kaichunge.
Kalchawā.
Lenda.
Lemkim.
Samewā.
Sarmuki.
Temonra.
Tenga.

PANGLUNG.

Dumi.
Nakhok.
Ratkurai.

PUMARHANG.

Ghāraja.
Hājiram.
Harirāma.
Mitāhang.
Roribang.
Tongmalung.
Wāhbuhang.
Yangduhang.

RALDOCHA.

Namersa.
Raldocha.

RAKHALI.

Bangdel.
Barāli.
Rākhāli.
Kāling.
Nāchiring.

RAPCHALI.

Pathoje.

RUNGDALI.

Bayek.
Dungmācha.
Turkasea.

SANGPANG.

Bāhaluk.
Bāli.
Bekumcha.
Bhalu.
Bukehawa.
Chāmling.
Chedapi.
Damrewa.
Dāmrung.
Dilpāli.
Dumangcha.
Dumipung.
Dumrebung.
Esara.
Hachāmora.
Hadikung.
Hirahang.
Huwatimtung.
Hungchangmara.
Kārtamcha.
Khidlume.
Kholapāchha.
Kipatte.
Marem.
Muluhangcha.
Mungchubang.
Nāmnuhangcha.
Newāhang.
Pangdal.
Panglunge.
Phali.
Pittrang.
Pokreli.
Puālang.
Radaksang.
Rānā.
Randocha.
Rawāli.
Repsunga.
Rowangkam.
Sāmāri.
Sāmārung.
Sāmsagemba.
Sudle.
Takreba.
Tammangcha.
Tomehang.
Tonrepubarā-mūkhi.
Tonrepāchba.
Wakchāli.
Wachelung.
Wanmācha.
Watemnung.
Wimasing.
Yangkim.

SAMSONG.

Sāhpāchha.

SAWĀLI.

Bārālung.
Hangsor.
Tawarang.
Kimdung.
Sāwali.

SERALUNGHA.

Birācha.
Plomācha.

RĀIS.

SIALJONG.

Deosāli.
Tulungia.

SOTANG.

Dasuu
Kubile.
Nāopāchha.
Nongpochos.
Ributis.
Rukupachha.

TULUNG.

Bārāsinga.
Buneri.
Chāmtirich.
Charlpa.
Cheljang.
Cherda.
Cheskule.
Chinda.
Chungkūm.
Dāmrang.
Demar.
Dhumke.
Dhusar.
Gariba.
Guribajai.
Hadikamcha.
Halacha.
Hangechie.
Hangkais
Hangkechun.
Hargsali.
Haopale.
Hasticha.
Horalhu.
Jilimal.
Jubelai.
Karling.
Langnachio.
Lanna Deosaling.
Loflāli.
Luchir.
Luwai.
Maipachung.
Moipa.
Moople.
Moksumcha.
Nāmchimichun.
Narchichun.
Nināmbancha.
Parāchi.
Peypuchha.
Raimut.
Repÿka.
Riamuche.
Rimdunge.
Ripdung.
Samsing.
Sange.
Semmuche.
Sialjenchu.
Sieljang.
Tampili.
Tekala.
Temlochi.
Wakam.
Wayangcha.
Wola.

WALUNG.

Adalung.
Busara.
Krāwāhang.
Siwahang.

YAKKA.

Angbura.
Chahare.
Chārkhole.
Chiktang.
Chukim.
Chyala.
Dion.
Eyokhang.
Hengma.
Hongden.
Ilungbang.
Kākim.
Kamenhang.
Koiyungwa.
Kokwāli.
Kongoreng.
Kumcha.
Kumbi.
Kyachung.
Kyakim.
Kyonga.
Labung.
Landichang.
Limbukim.
Lingka.
Lomba.
Madirai.
Madian.
Makara.
Makropa.
Mewahang.
Oktobhan.
Pangphu.
Pulung.
Putlang.
Samikeng.
Somme.
Somyang.
Sowāren.
Sukhim.
Tamli.
Tumpa'ra.
Yaemba.
Yangkembhu.
Yaphole.
Yoyenghang.
Yulungbang.
Yungwai.

YAMDANG.

Lakchowa.
Lakphewa.
Lenda.
Nukhchilung.
Rangchāwa.
Tesekhpar.
Yokcharany.

The following are said to be true Rāis, but have not yet been classified either as tribes (swang) or clans :—

Angali.
Angtipe.
Athpaharia.
Atabre.
Babauncha.
Bachanna.
Baghahang.
Bakunga.
Bamleangie.
Bangdele.
Barlos.
Bonom.
Bontharma.
Boankeiso.
Buchana.
Bumakamcha.
Bungnam.
Chamrasi.
Changcha.
Chara.
Chatpahang.
Chaurachā.
Chaurasi.
Chibang.
Chilingia.
Chinamka.
Chintange.
Chokang.
Chongkah.
Damling.
Diam.
Dikpausngle.
Dilngcha.
Dimacha.
Dingmah.
Dorpali.
Dukhim.
Ewokhang.
Gaora.
Garja.
Girung.
Girungpachha.
Haidibutha.
Hangkang.
Hangkula.
Hangrim.
Hangsang.
Hedangna.
Homodimcha.
Homelung.
Horongpachha.
Hospucha.
Ichingmewa.
Imole.
Jirung.
Jitsali.

Jubingeh.
Jubulia.
Kahang.
Karang.
Karmile.
Kasi.
Kengyung.
Kesange.
Kheresancha.
Khewa.
Khimole.
Khowali.
Knasancha.
Kulung
Kulungpachha.
Kumbiyakka.
Kuoptong.
Kurdacha.
Lamsong.
Lankawa.
Lenda.
Limruki.
Linkim.
Logaban.
Lulang.
Lungun.

Lungwi.
Machemare.
Madhehang.
Magrihang.
Maikam.
Makpali.
Malekumcha.
Malepung.
Maniya.
Manjichao.
Mayahang.
Mehring.
Mogne.
Moksumcha.
Nabuchor.
Nadung.
Nambocha.
Namdung.
Nardauncha.
Nechali.
Nikun.
Ninambauncha.
Ninaucha.
Nomahang.
Paderacha.
Palungratku.

Pangifu.
Pangwi.
Parali.
Phurkeli.
Pilmung.
Plembocha.
Potanga.
Pulunghang.
Pumar.
Rangrisa.
Rapungcha.
Regulauncha.
Ripale.
Rochingacha.
Rokon.
Sablateng.
Saiyopachha.
Sakurmi.
Sāmsong.
Sangsoi.
Salacho.
Salmali.
Saplate.
Shopong.
Sialjong.
Siptangia.

Sotangia.
Sukkim.
Sungdele.
Suptinung.
Thammi.
Tamachang.
Tamkuli.
Tamring.
Tangahang.
Tangbuah.
Tarakuk.
Taila.
Tungmalung
Turchan.
Tuya.
Ulamhang.
Umule.
Ungbura.
Utepachha.
Waidenhang.
Waitpang.
Walaka.
Wasangre.
Yankarung.
Yantambpa.
Yungchar.

(Eden Vansittart - Gurkhas - 1906 - page 131-136)

Clans / *Pachha*

Each Kirat Khambu Rai Thar has different types of Clans/Pachha which are too numerous to mention here i.e. *Walkchalis, Bungchhen, Khaptawli, Lakchhawa, Bultin,* etc. This *Pachha* helps to identify from where that particular Kirat Khambu Rai hails.

Sub-clan / *Samet / Samait*

Each Kirat Khambu Rai Thar/Pachha has different types of ***Sub-clans / Samet / Samait*** i.e *Dikwa, Bukchhapa, Pumacha, Wachhihang, Oingcha* etc. This Samet / Samait further pinpoints the family root of that particular Kirat Khambu Rai.

An interesting aspect of Rai kinship structure is that a single clan or a number of clans belong to a particular " Samait", which represents brother and sister together as ancestors. Thus, even if 'thar' or 'pachha' are different, the individuals may belong to the same 'samait', in which case they cannot intermarry and they have to observe mourning in case of the death of one of the samait members.

The various samaits and the thars / pachhas which belong to them are shown in table below:

Samait and Thar/ Pachha in Chhinamakhu

	Samait	Thar/ Pachha
`1.	Basuri – Yumitma	Yuongchen
`2.	Begsuppa- Begsupma	Kwoyo, Bayangi
`3.	Busuru- Wachchama	Chamling
`4.	Changchayupa- Chenkhama	Khamtu, Khimding, Siptungkha, Rupabung
`5.	Chenkhapa- Chenkhama	Khamyongkha
`6.	Chikita – Parengma	Thulung
`7.	Chimikpa- Chimikma	Mangpahang
`8.	Chyangchamu- Chenkhama	Khmatu, Awaicha, Huongchen, Ruchenbung
9.	Dedebungchuyoungpa-ma	Chamling
10.	Disismi-Begsupma	Kulunge
11.	Khasegpa-Sirungma	Thulunge
12.	Nachhapa-Nachama	Dibuhang
13.	Rukkupasnasmi- Yokma	Sotange

Source : Fieldwork, 1992-93

For reasons best known to themselves, the scholars writing on the Rais (see for example, Allen 1987, Barnouw 1955, Toba 1992) have paid little or no attention to the samait. It may be worthwhile to dwell briefly on the samait in view of the ambiguity of its meaning and significance to the kinship structure. Infact, Rais of Darjeeling and Sikkim have little or no idea about it. Even in Chhinamakhu, which is supposed to be one of the cultural preserves of the Rais, people with a clear idea about it are hard to find. Even a mangpa or nakchhong (priest) often appeared equally ignorant about its kinship or social significance.

Prima facie, the importance of the samait seems to be the following:

a) It is essential to pronounce the samait of the groom and the bride at the time of marriage.
b) The samait of a deceased person must be pronounced when the funeral procession returns to the house of the deceased.
c) It is related to the kul deota or ancestral deity.
d) On further enquiry, it is learnt that the paired structure of the samait represents bi-sexual phratry clans, drawing ancestry from primeval brothers and sisters.

Mc Dougal's study throws some light on the economics of reciprocity based on the structure. He uses the term " samlome", but there is no doubt that he is referring to the "samait". According to him, the brother pays a fee called " mauks paisa" of four paise to his sister's husband when she is married and continues to do so every time a woman of a clan is married until the third generation of her children arrives or as long as the siblings are alive, whichever is earlier. In return, the married sister pays a counter fee called "sibalo paisa", which is the subscription money for flags of commemoration for the deceased ancestors in natal clan. She continues to do this as long as she is alive though it is not every time someone dies in a clan that

she has to pay this symbolic money: it may even be paid by her younger sisters (1979: 82-83, 146). According to Mc Dougal, such a relationship " may be seen as a structural extension of the bond between brother and sister, an extension on the one hand to the entire group of the brother, and on the other to the descendents of the sister in the male line" (1979:147).

Further, the brother-sister relationship does not end with their marriages. Rather it is strengthened by a reciprocal ritual obligation between them. Thus it is not surprising to find a sort of procrastinated nato- locality of the married sisters among the Rais. For instance, Mc Dougal writes that the " newly married female continues to live in her natal home; even after she joins her husband she pays very frequent visits to her natal home, facilitated by the fact that the great majority of the marriages take place within the locality, and usually within the village" (1979: 83).

The particular instance of "sibalo paisa" payment in the Rai social organization indicates a fair possibility that they were influenced by Buddhism in the past. Their oral tradition also suggests that they originally came from the north, from a region known as Solo Khambu, which falls more in the cultural territory of the Buddhist Tibet than the Hindu Nepal. But after years of migration to the middle hills of Nepal and elsewhere such as Darjeeling and Sikkim, such traces of Buddhist influence seem to exist only in such forms as the payment of Sibalo paisa for the commemoration flags (T.B.Subba – Politics of Culture – A Study of the Three Kirata Communities in the Eastern Himalayas 1994- pg 62-64).

CHAPTER 5

TOTUMS

Kirat Khambu Rais Venerates *'Samkhalung'*- Three Stones where fire is burned and kept in the kitchen as "Sacred Place" (Sanctum Sanctorium). Nobody is allowed to go there accept the members of the family. It is also regarded as the resting place of the ancestor's souls.

PROHIBITIONS

Most of the Kirat Khambu Rais do not eat goat (mutton) meat.

PERMISSION/RESTRICTION TO MESS UP WITH RELATIONS

Permission: *Nichhama/Sali* (wife's younger sister) are permissible to be married)

Restrictions: *Namme/Telme/Buhari* (younger brother's wife) are not permissible to be married.

TRADITIONAL POLITICAL SYSTEM

a) Name: *Pancha* and *Daskirat* (Rais) *Pancha* comprising of five elderly Rais solves small cases and *Daskirat* - comprising of ten elderly Rais deals with complicated cases and gives judgement which is regarded as binding and final.

b) Structural Organisation: Only the Raipas (Pagari wearers) senior most Rais of the Village constitute Pancha and Daskirat (Ten Rais)

c) Functions:

   i. Economic control: Kirat Khambu Rai Pancha does not interfere in economic aspect of the community.

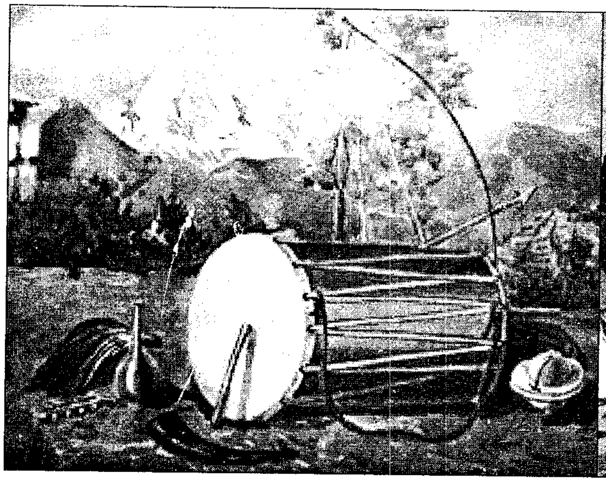
   ii. But entire social rules and regulations are controlled and regulated by Daskirat.

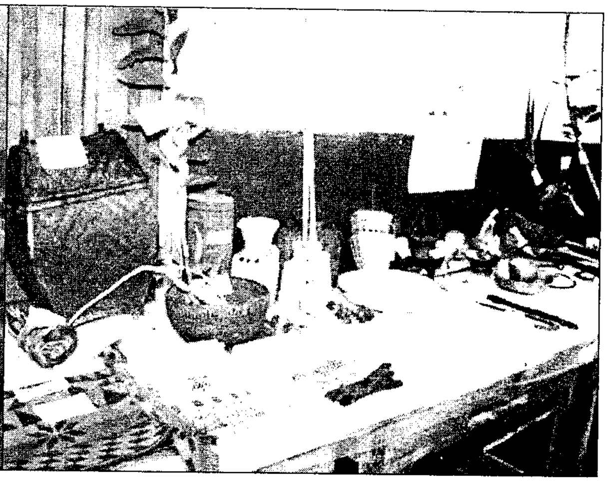
   iii. Religious Affairs are under the control of *Mangpa* (Priest)

   iv. Crime and Punishments mechanism - *Pancha/ Daskirat* has full power as far as crime and punishment is concerned. It interprets the rules and regulation of the tribe and any ruling passed by them is final and binding, but difficult cases and henious crimes are referred to the judiciary.

DISTINCTIVE ARTICLES

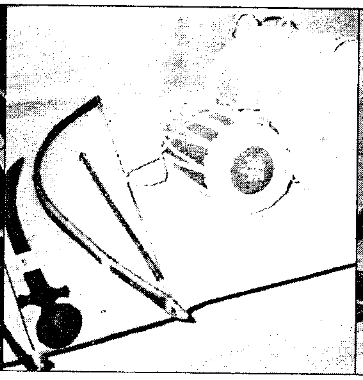
Kirat Khambu Rais are experts in use of bows- arrows *(Talibey/Beli/Phu),* are very skillful like Tarun Deep Rai of Namchi, South Sikkim Junior National Archery Champion), *gulely, matingra (gurlabey) Khukuri (dabey/betho), vala, balshi (Kungri), paso (Yatat), Jal (Gnasetkhi).* Since they are hunters from ancient times, Kirat Khambu Rais are also dexterous in Bamboo works and snares. Kirat Khambu Rais have their own typical music like *Dhol (Dhupmaken), Binayo* (Dong), *Muchunga (Dotengwa), Zampta (Chhenbiken).* Kirat Khambu Rais are also expert in blowing leaves to bring out musical tunes to accompany songs.





Chamar (Tail of Yak), Silibhey (Iron tongs with bells), Wabuk (Dried Gourd), Phung (Horn of wild buffello), Dhupmaken (Dhol), Talibey (Bow & Arrow), Chenbiken (Brass Cymbal)

Ladies woolen bag (Paksum), Thumse (Thoee) Chungey (Wooden vessel for storing liquor), Buk (Bamboo basket for trapping fish) Dalo (Bukho), Pira (Buchem)



Lady playing Muchungo (Dotangwa)- a metallic musical instrument

Binayo (Dong)- a bamboo musical instrument with a string attached

Sword (Dhopsel), Bow & arrow (Talibey/Beli-Phu), Dhol (Dhupmaken)

Khukuri (Betho), Kasha ko dabuka, Wabuk (Dried Gourd/Chindo), Kasha ko thal & Lota

Making of bamboo basket-Doko (Sep) & Mandro (Gurma)

Making of Dalo (Bukho) & Nanglo (Thamboku) from bamboo

CHAPTER 6

RELIGION

a) **Structure:** The Kirat Khambu Rais do not follow any religion in the strict sense of term. They are *"animists" and nature worshippers*. The religion, which the Kirat Khambu Rai follows, is mainly worship of ancestors *Maang (Pitri Pujas)* and nature worship. Kirat Khambu Rais do not believe in heaven or hell. There is no religious hierarchy. Kirat Khambu Rais engages *Mangpa* in their religious rites.

b) **System:** The most venerated deities are *Sumnima* and *Paruhang* who are regarded as the creators of the Kirat Khambu Rai people. Then, comes the ancestors. The main shrine of Kirat Khambu Rai is called *Samkhalung* (sacred kitchen) having three stones where all the important religious rites are conducted. Kirats also believe that all the souls of the dead *Raipas* and *Raimas* dwell here.

Sumnima and Paruhang
The creators of Kirat Khambu Rai People

The primitiveness of culture of the Kirat Khambu Rais becomes obvious when we refer to their form of religion. In fact, it is not religion in the straight sense of the term, because there is no concept of a God. The Kirat Khambu Rais are ancestor worshippers. They worship the ancestors annually. The place of worship is the most sacred place to a Kirat Khambu Rai. It consists of a fireplace *(Chula)* made of three stones' *Samkhalung'* (sacred kitchen). Above the *Samkhalung* a small platform like structure is made which is supposed to be the seat for the spirits of ancestors being worshipped. The *Samkhalung* forms the sanctumsanctorium, so to say and only clan members are allowed to go near it. Even married daughters have no right to go near it. Every item produced from the land has to be ceremoniously offered to the *Pitris* (ancestors). Only after such offering one is entitled to eat and drink the items (e.g. newly harvested rice and rice beer, millet beer *(Pumdilo Hangwa), hengma (Arakha)* ginger etc). A Kirat Khambu Rai cannot kill his pig *(Bak)* right away; he must perform a puja before killing so that this killing becomes a religious sacrifice. The newly married bride has to be ceremoniously presented to the Pitris (ancestors) 'at the *Samkhalung*. Without it she cannot become a member of her husband's clan.

The Mang (Pitri Ritual) is performed in Bhadaw (Aug- Sept) and Mangseer (Nov- Dec). During Mang, apart from the new produce of the land, chicken or pig is sacrificed and blood offered on the Samkhalung. The family members and relatives are served Wachippa, Dhero (Yuwa), Chicken meat/pork and plenty of millet beer.

NAGI RITUAL

According to Martin Gaenszle (Himalayan Space-Cultural Horizons and Practices - p.142 – 145), this important cult is linked with the agricultural cycle. It is mainly celebrated during the harvest season in the 'descending time' (Udhauli/Sakela), together with the first fruit rituals in autumn (full moon of November-December). In the case of need, such as illness and misfortune, the rite can be celebrated at any other time. Its overall purpose is to ensure general prosperity and fertility through the presentation of offerings: these are given to buy head soul (Saya Khetma) for the living creatures.

The performance is addressed to the snake deity- 'Nagi' which is the primal being in Mewahang /Kulung /Sampang /Chamling, etc. mythology, the one which stands at the very beginning of the creation process and from which all beings ultimately originate. Thus it is the most apical ancestors, and the Mewahang/Kulung/Sampang/Chamling etc. often say; "we are the children of 'Nagi".The creation myth recounts how 'Nagi', which lives in the waters, made a mud clod flow down the river from the source. This mud clod eventually ended up in the plains where it burst with a big bang, resulting in the creation of human being from whom eventually Somnima descended.

Thus Nagi is an aquatic being which is seen as responsible for the fertility of humans, but also of the soil, water and earth are closely associated in Rai cosmology.

When performing the rite the 'Nagine'- i.e. the respective tribal priest, sits in front of his offerings of grains (unhusked rice), millet, millet beer, ginger, holding a sword in his hand and recites in a singing voice.

He sits in the back part of the house in the lower half facing 'up hills'. After an initial invocation of the deity, he begins his first journey, proceeding from the hearth inside the house through the door, over the veranda and then travels through the ancestral territory, the 'cairi.' He passes by the watering place (dhara), crosses a small rivulet, enters the ancestral territory of the neighbouring Yamdange and proceeds on down the conflunce where the Sankhuwa River meets the Arun River. There he presents the offering to 'Nagi', asking the deity to be satisfied and benevolent, and particularity to provide 'Saya'. The confluence of the two rivers is equated with the plains, i.e. the Tarai, which is associated with good rice cultivation and low land settles like the Tharu (bajuho thairuho). After thus having given his due, the 'Nagi' returns up the same way, making sure that no souls (lawa) are left down there.

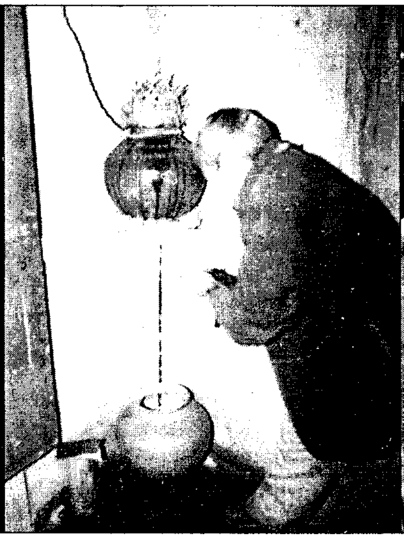
Back at the hearth, the priest together with the assembled elders celebrates an offering to the three hearth stones (Situlung/Samkhalung/Sutulung/Chula): It is followed by a special head-raising ceremony (saya poikma) performed on the patient (madauro/ somoniya /tunkha) of the client household. The priest proceeds upstream, following the Sankhuwa river up to its source. This is the place where 'Nagi' is said to reside, and here a divination (bonbo) is held in order to enquire about the state of the client household. The divination is not addressed to the snake deity directly but to the 'whistling Thrush' (Makwa-yumma), which for reasons laid down in the origin, myths-is in charge of this function. After the deity has indicated its will through the priest's words and through his trembling (i.e. mild possession), he returns, proceeding on the same path, naming the places he traverses, he eventually comes back to the house. The rite concludes with a head raising ceremony for the clients and for the Nagire himself.

Preparation of the different parts of the pig (chabodam) and chicken (sarudam birudam) and arranging them in the thumche (dhoba/toee) for the Nagi rituals

Photo Courtesy : Mr. Nakul Das Rai

Kuruwa Nagi - Nagi Nokcho/Nagi Lamlocha (Head Nagi) with his 8 assistants (Kuruwacha) performing the Nagi ritual

Saya Poikma-Head raising ceremony being perfomed on the patient



Dichari-Chekudi Bukudi-round earthern vessels for keeping millet beer for the Nagi ritual

Nagine performing Nagi ritual

The Nagi is of two types:

(a) Sada (Lili) Nagi.

(b) Kuruwa Nagi.

(A) In Sada (Lili) Nagi only unhusked rice, millet and ginger is offered.

(B) In Kuruwa Nagi: along with unhusked rice (dhan /ra), millet (kodo /lis), ginger (aduwa /bichu /bechuk), chimfing (beljam bung), different parts of a whole pig (baksa) and chicken (wa) is offered. The different parts of the pig are known as 'Chabodam' and chicken 'Sarudam-Birudam'.

In Kuruwa, there is the head Nagine (Nagi Nokcho /Nagi Lamlocha) and eight assistants (elders /Kuruwa Cha). The Head Nagi recites, guides and performs the rite, while others (Kuruwa Cha) chant after him.

According to Charles Mc Dougal (The Kulunge Rais-1979-p66), the Kulunge Rais have an important series of rituals associated with 'Nagi' the water serpent. In front of the house, along the lower wall, are two adjacent stands for placing large earthern pots for beer (Chaneko jar /di). When rites are performed for the god Nagi during the summer (Ubauli /Sakewa), when Nagi is up in the mountains a jar filled with beer (Di) for ritual offerings, is placed on the up-stream stand. When a rites of the same series is performed during winter (Udhauli/Sakela), when Nagi is lower down in the valleys, the jar is placed on the 'downstream' stand. The beer stands are known as 'dichardi / dichari'. Even today, Kulunge Rai of Assam Lingzey, Nandok, and other Rais of Yangang, Sosing and other parts of Sikkim perform this Nagi Ritual.

C) **Function:** All the religious functions are performed by *Mangpa* also known as *Bijuwa.*

D) **Rai Priest:** They include *Mangpa* or *Bijuwa, Nakchhong, Mabimi-Kubimi* and *Dowang.*

i) ***Mangpa* or *Bijuwa:*** is the main Priest of Rais. *Mangpa* conducts the *Samkhalung* ritual ceremony as well as other religious rites of household deities. He performs *Thomwa/Chinta* to keep safe and well being of the family members and also prophecy the future happenings in the family and society.

ii) ***Nakchhong:*** Conducts the Sakewa (Worship of nature) ritual ceremony, which takes place twice in a year- i.e. *Dongwangna* - A prayer to appease the natural power of cultivating and *Donglasha* (a prayer to appease the natural power of harvesting) *Dongwanga* is celebrated on the full moon day of Vaishak-(May-June) and *Donglasha* on the full moon day of Mangsir (Nov-Dec).

iii) ***Mabimi:*** Chanting *Mundum* (oracle chant) performs the last rite of the deceased in the following terms:

a) One who dies a natural death after advanced age, his/her departed soul is allowed to live in the *Samkhalung* (three erected hearth stones), as a venerable ancestor

b) The deceased soul of an un-married man/woman is allowed to live in *rongeli* i.e. the atmosphere of outside the main door of the house.

c) The young or immature married or adopted persons departed

soul is kept in *Namelung* i.e. ever sunny stone on the lap of highest mountain.

d) One who dies an unnatural death such as accidental or suicidal death that person's soul is allowed to live in *hillaten* i.e. blood shaded rocky place.

e) A woman who dies during delivery, her soul is allowed to dwell in *Manmangten* i.e. gloomy and steep rock.

iv) **Kubimi:** Conducts the above cited terms and performs in the absence of *Mabimi.*

v) ***Dowang:*** Performs only minor religious rites and to cure a sick. He chants the spell to ward off the affected evil spirits or the diseases of the sick person and uses wild herbs as medicines. Senior or experienced *Raipas* may also conduct some of the minor religious rites in absence of *Mangpa.* There is also important role of *Raimas* whose function is to minor religious rites and marriages.

E) **Deities:** The Kirat Khambu Rais believe in various deities such a 1) *Aitabarey,* 2) *Sikary,* 3) *Aathaney,* 4) *Naya* 5) *Buddheni* and 6) *Yowa.* The Kirat Khambu Rais perform various respective rites worshipping these deities.

Mangpas performing Chinta / Tomwa with Ghungring and by beating the Zarke Thal (Brass plate)

Mangpa and Mangma

CHAPTER 7

FESTIVALS

The main Kirat Khambu Rai festivals are *Sakewa* and *Sakela.*

Sakewa is celebrated on full moon of *Baishakh* (May- June) every year and *Sakela* is celebrated on full moon of *Mangsheer* (Nov- Dec).

SAKEWA

The Kirat Khambu Rais's, Great Festival.

Sakewa is one festival, which is celebrated with great enthusiasm by all Kirat Khambu Rai. It is a harvest festival where worshipping of crops is done (Baali Puja). It is also know as *Bhumi Puja or Chandi Puja* or land worshiping ceremony by others. It is generally celebrated by all Kirat Khambu Rais; especially in the villages. Sakewa is celebrated on full moon of Baishakh i.e. May – June. (Sakewa/ Ubhauli /Bungbanwa /Dongwanga).

In Sakewa, people in the villages gather in huge circle and dance (Sili). They follow the hand and foot movements of their leader viz. Sili Mangpa (Male) and Sili Mangma (Female). The hand movements follow a specific sequence and all must strictly follow the action of the leader.

Of the various Silis, "Chasum Sili" is very popular. It is a dance depicting planting of paddy, harvesting, husking, cooking and finally eating the cooked rice. "Paklewa Sili" is a very simple dance there are no specific hand or leg movements. Some Silis depict the activities of animals and birds. "Narowa Sili" is one of them, which depicts the lifecycle of the crane (Karang – Kurung). With the movements of their hands, the dancers show how the cranes raise their chicks, teach them how to fly, fly freely in the open sky and when they are attacked by hawks, they huddle together into two circles and fly in clockwise and anti-clockwise direction to confuse the hawk.

Kirat Khombu Rais are basically Nature worshippers. It is believed that they are descendants of Puruhang and Sumnima of the Himalaya Kailash and Sagarmatha. It is customary that some rituals must be performed before the Sakewa. The Nakchung (village priest), Maheng Kulu (Assistant to Nakchung) and the villagers proceed to the sacred place, which is generally located in the hilltop. On the way, the Nakchung performs Akta Swang

Sengma (Water Spout /Dhara Ceremony). The altar consists of a Phallic stone (Linga/Narilung/Pao) with Trisuls on either side. Nakchung and his assistant carry grains, ginger and rice wine in wabuk (cindo/dried gourd) while the devotees carry the grains, other produce of their land and water in Chunge. Traditionally a chicken or both a pig and a chicken were offered as sacrifices at the altar. Then the Nakchung chants prayers and sprinkles water, wine, grain and ginger at the altar. The Nakchung request Mother Nature to protect the village from disease and draught and for good rain, good sunshine and harvest. Then they proceed to the open space in front of the house where the Nakchung fixes a bamboo pole on the ground. Then he enters the house, goes to the Samkhalung / Situlung / Sutulung (the three hearth stones representing the ancestral deities of the Rais) of the house. (The hearthstones represent the ancestral deities of the Rais). The Nakchung performes the Khutlung Khutma (Fire Place / Three hearth stone worshiping ceremony). Ginger and blood of chicken are offered at the hearthstones. The hen sacrifice is called Mang hulu. Finally the villagers enter the house, dance around the fireplace, wine, dine and proceed to the next house.

It is difficult for us to say when the Sakewa celebration started. It most probably started when man learned about agriculture and farming.

Drinking from bamboo water spout (Dhara)

Akta Swang Sengma (Water spout worshipping ceremony)

Narilung (Linga) worship with offering of chicken

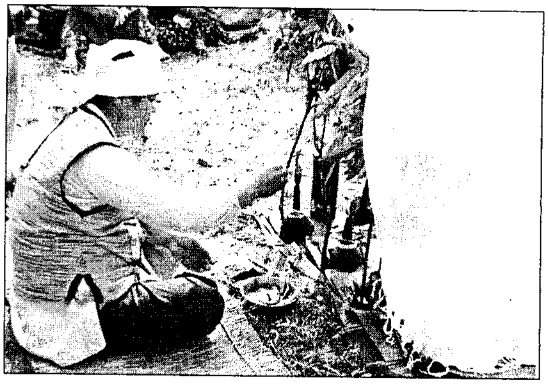
Khutlung Khutma (Three hearth stone) worshipping ceremony

SAKELA

(Udhauli /Dongdawa /Donglasa) is celebrated in full moon Mangsheer i.e. Nov- Dec for thanksgiving for good harvest and peaceful climate.

Therefore, it was appropriate that once or twice a year, we should thank Mother Nature and offer grains and sacrifices for good rain, good sunshine and harvest.

Sakewa Sili (dance) - Chasum sili during Sakewa



Thanking mother nature for good rain, good sunshine and good harvest during Sakela

Paklewa Sili (dance)

CHAPTER 8

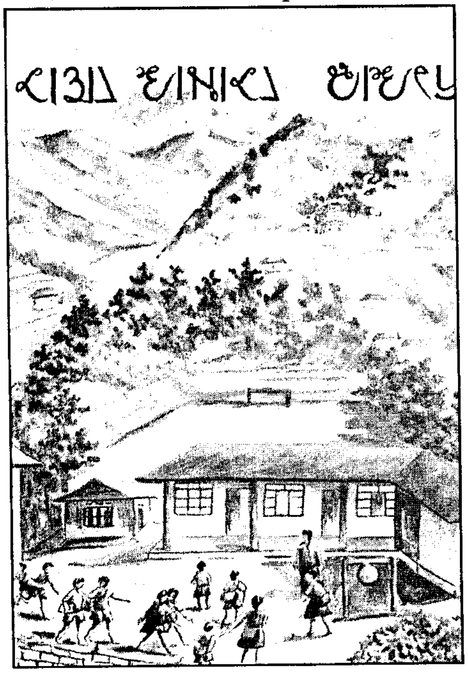
KIRAT KHAMBU RAI LANGUAGE AND SCRIPT

On 2.6.1994, the Government of Sikkim recognized and declared the following communities as Other Backward Classes (OBC)- Bhujel, Gurung, Limbu, Rai, Mangar, Sunwar and Tamang.

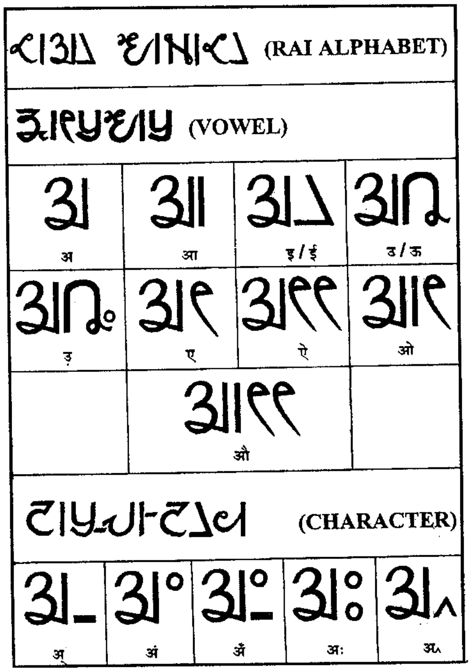
On 21.3.1995, the Sikkim Legislative Assembly passed Bill and included Newari, Rai, Gurung, Mangar, Sherpa and Tamang languages also as Official Languages of the State along with Nepali, Bhutia, Lepcha and Limbu. Kirat Khambu Rais has twenty three different dialects of which Bantawa dialect has been officially agreed upon as a common lingua franca-i.e Official Kirat Khambu Rai language. This was done during the annual general meeting of the Akhil Kirat Rai Sangh Sikkim on 15.6.1996 after much discussion and deliberation about the common lingua franca.

As we did not have a script of our own the Kirat Khambu Rai script popularized by late Guru Kripasalyan Rai of Daramdin, West Sikkim was adopted as the official Kirat Khambu Rai script on 23.5.1998. It is derived from the Kirat Lipi (from which the Limboos have taken the Srijonga Lipi), but some modifications have been done to make it more computer friendly and student friendly.

In January 2003 two text books, Rai Chammary Lachep (Rai alphabet text book) for primary class and Rai Young Chaplayak- Bushy Dak for class I have been printed by the AKRS. For this Mr. B.B.Rai, Chairman, Kirat Khambu Rai Language and Script Research and Development Committee, has done a lot of research work. He was instrumental in bringing out the Kirat Khambu Rai Script. He was assisted by his brother and other AKRS members from all



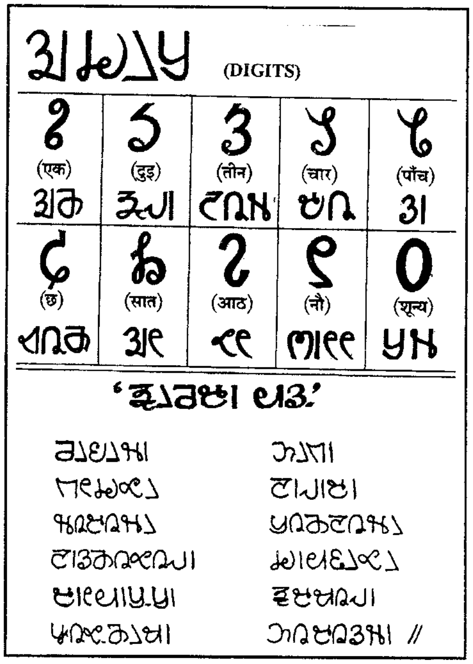
Kirat Khambu Rai Text Book for Primary Class



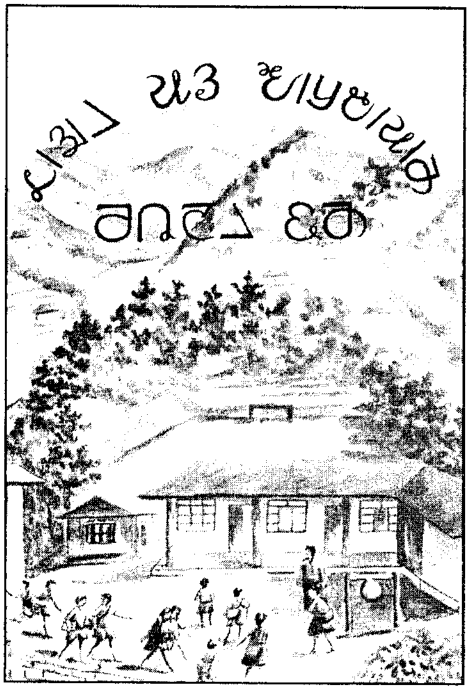
Kirat Khambu Rai Alphabets (Vowels and Characters) It is pronounced as Hung ā, Hung āā, Hung ēē, etc.

over Sikkim for the research work. The Kirat Khambu Rai language is being taught in the various schools run by the associations all over Sikkim. The text books have also been submitted to the Education Department, Govt. of Sikkim and the Govt. has appointed two regular Kirat Khambu Rai teachers from this Academic Session-2005.

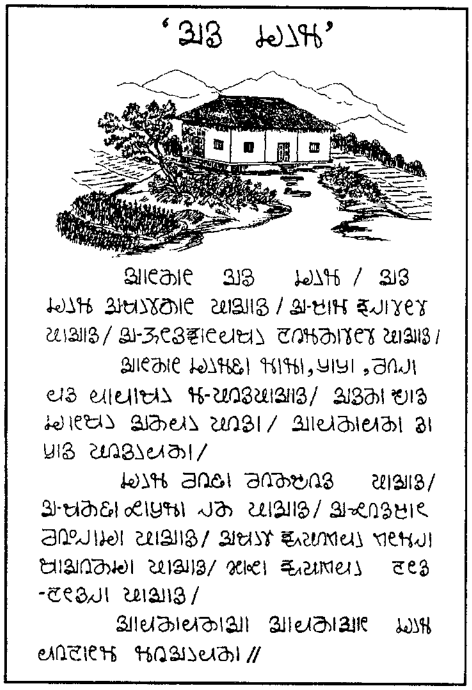
Kirat Khambu Rai Alphabets (Consonants)
It is pronounced as
Ka Om, Kha Om, Ga Om, etc.



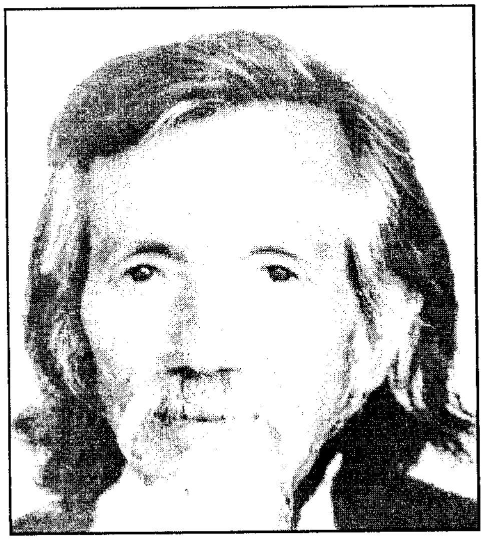
Kirat Khambu Rai Digits (Numbers)
It is pronounced as Ak, Hawa, Soom, Lu Anga, Tuk, A Re, Bhaw, Pam



Kirat Khambu Rai Text Book for Class-I



Ang Khim-A lesson on 'My House' in Kirat Khambu Rai Script



Lt. Kripasalyan Rai of Daramdin,
West Sikkim

I. Kirat Khambu Rai Language

According to the opinion of the Scholars of Language and literature, about 6000 languages and sublanguages used around the world over fall under different families. Among these Kirat Rai language is one of the 71 languages of the Tibet Burman Sub-Family prevelent in the Indian sub-continent.

Among the various linguistic scholars,as per the Greherson language classification, Kirat Rai language falls under the category of Tibeto Himalayan Branch of the Tibeto- Burman sub -Family and the Tibeto Chinese family. It was because of the various social, religious, economic, political and many other reasons and problems, Kirat Rai language has different types of languages and sub-languages. The main reason for this is the lack of proper protection and propogation of Kirat Rai language and absence of language in written from and its privelence and existance only as a spoken language among the people.

Though the linguists have classified Kirat Rai languages and sub-languages under various categories but the main languages which are prevelent among tha people are Kulung, Thulung, Khaling, Chamiling, Bantawa, Sampang, Lohrung, Knacharing etc. Though these languages are spoken in different styles, it has been found that the Rootword of these languages are similar and these langauges are co-related with each other.

Among the various states of India, the state Government of Sikkim under the leadership of Mr.Pawen Chamling, Honorable Chief Minister, recognized Kirat Rai language along with other languages as state offical languages. The "Akhil Kirat Rai Sangh Sikkim" after undertaking detail study of the various Kirat Rai languages spoken all around the state, declared Bantawa Rai language, the language which was being used by maximum precentage of Kirat Rai people, as Lingua Franca of the Kirat Rai community and declared it as offical formal Kirat Rai language on 15.06.1996. It was also decided to publish book and magazines on Kirat Rai language and to teach the language informally. In this connection, the gramatical facts of the Kirat Rai (Bantawa) language as per the study paper is placed below:

In Kirat Khambu Rai Language

1. Root words are of single alphabets and tha root word of the verb also work as verb of singular Present Tense of the Second and Third Person.
2. The verb is present on the last of the sentence and certain verb are inclusive and exclusive verb.
3. Joint alphabets are almost not found.
4. There is no gender difference either in grammer nor in language.
5. '5' alphabets is widely used.
6. Inclusive and exclusive pronoun is found in the Plural First Person of the Human Pronoun.
7. If any Non- human thing is humanised then it falls under the category of Human Pronoun.
8. Like the other languages of Tibeto Burman Sub Family Pronominalization is found.
9. Numbers are used in two categories

For eg.

(i) Human Number
Singular/Double/Plural

(ii) Non-Human Number
Singular/Plural

10. Glottal Stop is parctised in voice/Pronounciation and this practice gives different meaning to same words.
11. The central Vowel or "Back rounded-U" is used as vowel.
12. The pronoun depicting audience also works as Human Pronoun of Third Person.
13. Most of the Root Words are simillar to the language of Tibeto Chinese Family.
14. Though these are many language but "Ubhokholay" and "Udhokholay" language is mostly used while speaking for practical purposes.

For eg.

UBHOKHOLAY	UDHOKHOLAY	NEPALI	ENGLISH
अङ्का	उङ्का	म	I
कङ	कुङ	दाँत	Teeth
ख	खु	झाडा (गुह्)	Stool
मक	मुक	आँखा	Eye
ह	हु	रगत	Blood

In the above words,though the use of alphabets and its pronounciation are different but the meaning is same.Hence, these two languages are co-related with each other.Linguists have viewed that "Udhokholay" language is easier in printing in press and in teaching and learning, so, this book has given priority to "Udhokolay" language.

II KIRAT KHAMBU RAI SCRIPT

It has been proved that the script of the various languages prevelent round the world stared developing from Pictography.Script is just a symbol of sound and it is not essential for any language to have its own script.When the Akhil Kirat Rai Sangh,Sikkim declared the most popular Bantawa Rai language as Lingua-Franca or Kirat Rai language after the state Government headed by Shri Pawan Chamling gave status of state official language toKirat Rai language in the year 1995 along with other languages. The organisation after preparing the final script of the language and doing its research,decided to use Kirat Rai script prepared by Late Guru kripashalyan Rai on 23rd May 1998.

The founder and promotor of this Kirat Rai script was Late Mahaguru Tika Ram Rai resident of Daragoan,Rimbik Block,Darjeeling Block,West Bengal.He had used this script some 8-9 decades ago while preparing "Sumhung" or religious Rai book. It was in the year 1969, when Late Guru Kripashalyan Rai published the Rai Alphabets book (Rai Akshar Barnamala) in this script through cyclostile,that this Kirat Rai script came to be known to the people as Kirat Rai alphabets. Those alphabets which were used in the religious book and the Kirat Rai alphabets book were divided into consonant alphabets (Chai-Chap)and vowels (Hop-Chap)according to vowel and consoant science.

As per the descision of the AKRS taken on 26.4.1998 to prepare an evoluted from of the Kirat Rai script by taking the consoant and vowels used in those books and retaining its originality,this book has been prepared by using the Evoluted Form of the script.

AS PER THE RESEARCH PAPER OF THE KIRAT RAI SCRIPT THE FOLLOWING FACTS ARE FOUND:-

Kirat Rai script are divided into two catagories

(i) **Hopchap or vowel and**

(ii) **Chaichap or consonant**

(i) Formed on the basis of sound Hopchap is regarded as "Hung"or creator or unchangable which creater its own identity without any help. Hence while, pronounciating hopchap, the creates sound remains before the vowel. There are nine vowel in hopchap. They are अ आ अि अु अू अे अै अो अौ Among these seven are the main vowel and the rest अे and अौ are used very rarely.

(ii) Chaichap is regarded as creation or changable and creates its identity only with the help of other alphabets. Hence while pronouncing Chaicha "Ohm" sound remains after the alphabet. There are 31 alphabet in Chaichap.

They are: क ख ग घ ङ च छ ज झ ञ ट ठ ड ढ त थ द ध न प फ ब भ म य र ल व स श ह।

Among these 31alphabets the 5 alphabets ट ठ ड ढ ञ are regarded as similar to that of त थ द ध य(As these five alphabets ट ठ ड ढ ञ are used in maximum while speaking Rai language, these have been included in Chaichap

FACTS OF KIRAT RAI SCRIPT.AS PER SCRIPT RESEARCH PAPER:

1. It is to be accepted that the Kirat Rai alphabets or Sumhung developed under the influence ofMaithili Script, Nandinagiri Script, Ranjana Script and Devanagari Script.As the 'क' consonant of the Devanagri Script is similar to that of the 'क' consonant prevelent in the inscription of Raju Mehru Brahma of Chamba some 1200 years ago, in the same manner the Chaichep 'क' alphabet has also passed through the same path.
2. The script prevelent world over are divided into two categories viz. with alphabets and without alphabets.The Kirat Rai Script falls in the category of "with alpabets"
3. The appearence of Kirat Rai Script is quite similar to that of Cuniform Script or angular or triangular letter of alphabet used during 5000 to 01 B.C.by Sumery community of Mesopotamia.
4. Though the brain/cerebrum of Late Mahaguru Tika Ram Rai, the propogator of Kirat Rai Script has disappeared and dissolved in the earth but through this script the Sumhung, vedic Knowledge and Mundum has remained with us.
5. As the religious rites of the Kirat Rai community is performed through the use of hand written Sumhung, the religious Kirat Rai book the Kirat Rai Script will remain forever through this practice.

METHOD OR PROCESS OF USING KIRAT RAI SCRIPT

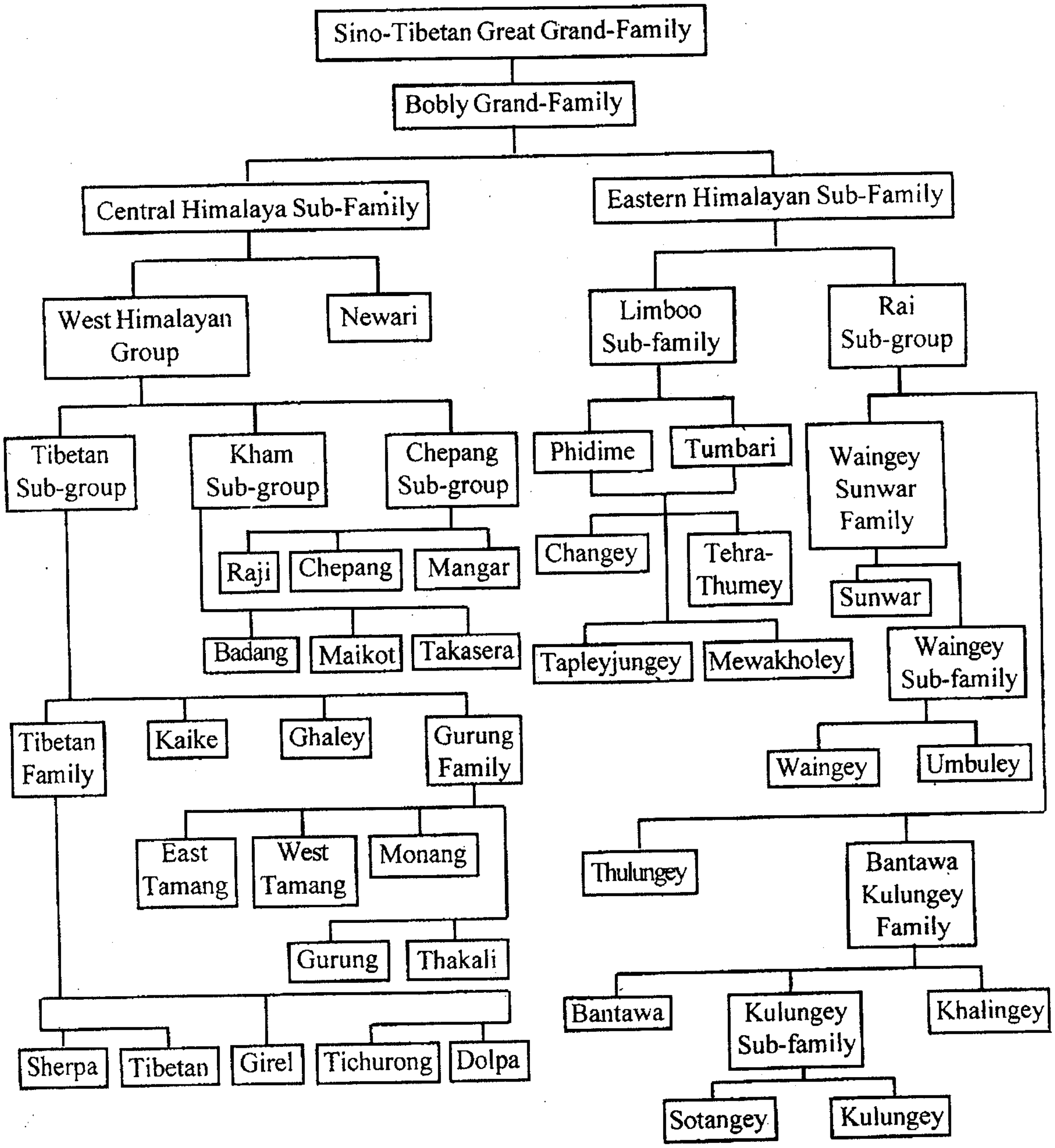
1. While writing this script it is written from Left to right
2. In this script the upper line is not used.
3. While making single word para (-)sign is used.

4. While making joint word ^ sign is used.
5. While using vowel character,it is used in the right side of the main alptabet.
6. The resonance sign is also used in right side of the main alphabet.
7. (ꜰ)will work for(ꜰ)and (ꜰ); (̨).will work for (̨)and(̨) .If both the signs are to be used at one place the colon (:)can be used instead of it. Whenever need arises to use linguistic characters for para stop, full stop,comma,question mark,exclamation mark,bracket etc. while writing long text,the signs used in International languages are used.

Kirat Rais have different dilects according to their sub- cast and these are not in written form so it was necessary to change these dileets in Kirat Rai language and Kirat Rai literature. For the development of the language it was felt that research work and teaching and learing process should be continued with the help of book in Kirat Rai language, grammar book and dictionry. To propagate the language, AKRS had given dictionry to provide non-formal teaching classes in the year 1997 in Pareng Gown in West Sikkim and Kirat Rai School were started in Namchi is South Sikkim. Other Non-Formal Rai School centres are Tadong Sec. School in East district, Lower Sichey (E), Ranka(E) Rolep (E) and Utter Mukrung, Bermiok, Sakyong, Rinchenpong and Upper Pareng Village and Tikpur in West Sikkim. The AKRS is trying to provide teaching centres in other district too.

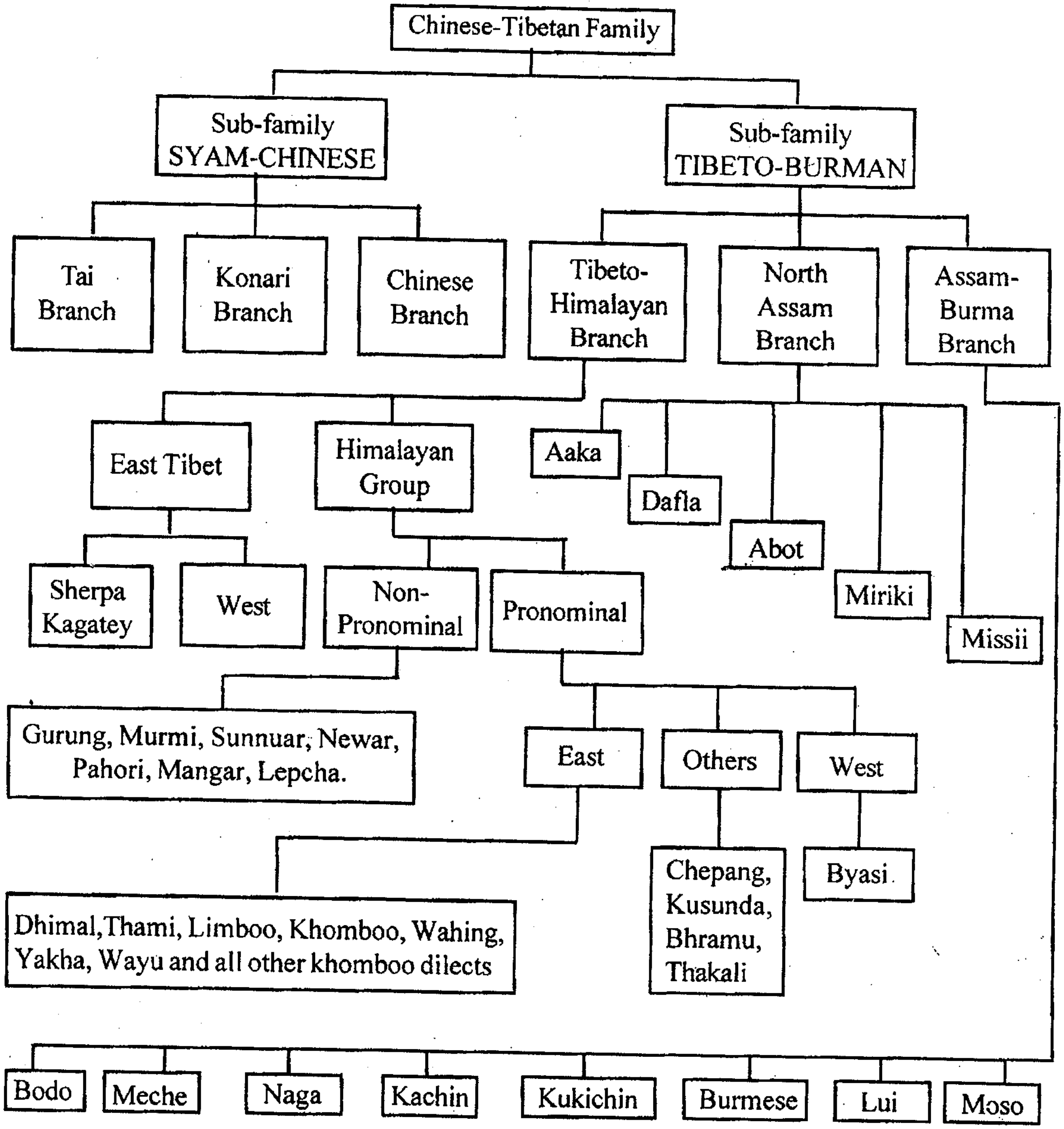
3. Glover Classification

According to Waren, W. Glover (1974) of Summer Institute of Linguistic Division, 36 languages of Nepal could be classified on lexicostastical basis as follows:



Source : J.R. Subba-The Limboos of Eastern Himalayas & Sikkim- 1999 p-231

1). George Grierson and Cono Classification:



George and Cono (1903, Vol.iii Part 1) have classified the Tibeto-Burman languages of Sino-Tibetan family on the basis of phonetics, words and grammar but a number of changes have been made later on by the other linguists. However, their study and classification is considered important.

Source : J.R. Subba-The Limboos of Eastern Himalayas & Sikkim- 1999 p-229

CHAPTER 9

RITES OF PASSAGE : (LIFE CYCLE)

BIRTH RITES

According to Sueyoshi Toba:

(A) The Birth of a Rai child takes place in the house of the husband and at times in the house of the wife's parents. Some women seek the help of an experienced woman. The husband assists in making a cradle for the new born. The umbilical cord is generally cut by the mother herself or an elderly lady and she also disposes the afterbirth herself. The experienced old woman ties the umbilical cord with a piece of thread, and the knot this made is laid over a rupee and severed. The child is washed with hot waster, while the mother's clothes are changed. A fowl –cock in the case of a boy, hen for a girl – and some rice beer are first procured. The fowl is killed and the gullet of the fowl is now put on one side, while the rest of the bird is placed in utensil containing oil, spices and rancid butter. The gullet is next placed on top of the mixture and the whole cooked together.
The gullet is now placed on the top of the plate of rice which has been set aside for the child. After this, three leaves are placed on the ground, and one is offered to the family diety – known as Pitri – another to the deities in general and the third as a proprietary offering to the evil spirits. The mother now partakes of a little food. (W.B.Northey – The Gurkhas – 1927 p. 239-40)
The Khaling Rai keep the umbilical cord in a tree near the house, the Athpaharia Rai bury it nearby field (Dahal 1985:86) and the Bantawa Rai keep it in a bamboo cane.

A new born infant is wrapped in old skirts of the mother and kept close by her. As a general characteristic there is are no specific rites of birth itself. For a period of four days after the delivery, the mother and the house in which delivery took place are considered ritually unclean. The mother must not cook, neither for herself not for others. She is supposed to rest and not leave the small area allotted to her and the new baby, in the rear portion of the house. Nobody except the new born should touch her. She is given especially nourishing food prepared by female relatives. The new mother and child may not be visited by any male family member.

(B) Purification Ceremony
On the fourth day after birth a purification rite is performed. On this occasion the family members of both parents are expected to attend. Each household represented brings a chicken and some millet beer. The new mother washes all the clothes and cleans the area inside the house which she and her new born had occupied. A Mangpa is summoned for the occasion and performs the rites of 'lifting the head' (Sayachongma) of mother and child. This is to exorcise any evil spirit which may have been present at the time of birth. Later a feast is given and all the people present at the rite participate. After this, without any further ritual proceedings, all restrictions are lifted.

(C) Name Giving Ceremony
This ceremony is performed on the third day after birth for a daughter and on the fourth day for a son by the Athpaharia Rai (Dahal, 1985:84). Other Rais do not make any distinction concerning

the number of days. There are no particular rules as to who has the dicisive voice in the name giving.

Kirat Khambu Rai mother carrying her child in a bamboo cradle (Kokro/Yayunga)
Photo Courtesy - Martin Gaenszle : Origin & Migration of Mewahang Rai

(D) Rice Eating Ceremony/ Weaning

The Athpaharia and Bantawa have a rice eating ceremony but the Khaling, Kulung and Mewang do not have such a ceremony. Also for them, rice is by no means their main staple diet but they have a variety of cereals – millet, corn, buckwheat and wheat. The rice eating ceremony is a happy occasion and is celebrated when the daughter is five months old, or a son is six months old, when all the relatives are invited. On the day preceding of actual ceremony, a chicken/pig is killed, preparation for a feast are made, and the childs clothes are got ready.

(E) Hair Cutting Ceremony

As a son turns three years old, he will have his first hair- cut which is performed by the maternal uncle but like the rice eating ceremony, this is observed by Athpaharia, Chamling and Bantawa Rais only.

They appear to be no rites of passage which incorporate the new born into society: rather his status is taken for granted. (Rites of Passage: An Aspect of Rai Culture- By Sueyoshi Toba, 1992-pg 17-22)

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Father is the. head of the family. In his absence, mother takes over the charge of the head of the family. Seniority in age, irrespective of sex, is very much respected in Kirat Khambu Rai Society.

TYPE OF INHERITANCE

The sons inherit both movable and immovable properties from the father in Kirat Khambu Rai community.

CHAPTER 10

MARRIAGE RITES

According to Charles MC Dougal (The Kulunge Rai - 1979, page 103-121), there are three types of marriage: (A) Arranged marriage (B) Marriage by fine payment (Jari) (C) Marriage by force (elopement).

Of these the arranged marriage is considered to be the most prestigious.

1. Arranged Marriage takes place in two stages:
   Initial Marriage Ceremony
   Final Rite of Marriage
   But in modem times generally the initial and final rites are combined to save money and time.

(A) Initial Marriage Ceremony: (Sagun / Niwa)

Kongpi/Bongpa, an intermediary, takes liquor provided by the boy's parents and goes to visit the members of the girl's family. The first visit in the 'sodhana'- 'request,' second is 'multheki' - larger presentation of liquor- the main payment. The third visit is called 'bhakha' - the promised date of fulfillment. The couple is formally engaged from the time of the multheki is accepted.

Multheki-Large presentation of liquor in wooden and earthern vessels

In addition to the multheki, a personal gift as makamundari/saya mundari, is given to the bride from the groom which consists of ten rupees (in silver rupee coins).

At the time of initial marriage ceremony itself, the groom is expected to give the bride a coin necklace, consisting if possible of 50-100 silver (Indian) rupee coins, gold nose rings, gold earrings, (Chepte Sun), gold necklace (Tilahari).

The initial ceremony of the marriage is known as sagun- the auspicious event. All residents of the village have a standing invitation. The party (janti) consisting of the bongpa, the groom, his lokondia, some village notables leave the grooms house and proceed tot hat of the b ride. Entering t he house, the bride and her lokondi being seated to one side, the groom and his lokonda are escorted there and made to sit down on the mat beside them. Beer is served to the gathering and there are few speeches proclaiming the suitability of the marriage and wishing the couple well in the future.

The bride and groom in-turn the bride first and the groom present bowls of liquor provided by the grooms family to the members of the brides family and rest of her relatives, along with salutation. This is known as "sainu phemu"'the changing of the relationship'.

Sewa Chongma (Dhog-Bhet) Prostration in front of the parents & elders and Sino Pherno

Lastur-A set of 8 copper vessels, liquor, grains and pork

During sainu phernu the bride and groom move around the room in a clockwise direction. The 'makamundari' presentation and the 'sainu phernu' are the two absolutely indispensable features of the initial marriage ceremony. Then the groom's party escorts the bride to his home. At the grooms house there is a feast. The next day, the bride is dressed in new clothes and she wears the ornaments and jewelry given by her husband. A larger procession I ed by bongpa, village elders, a band of musicians of Tailors (Damai) caste, the bride and groom, the lokonda and lokondia return to the brides home. They must take a gourd container and a large earthern vessel, both filled with beer (Chaneko jar); two large wooden containers (kathuwa) and a single bottle, all full of liquor (arakhal hengma), a leg of pork, and twelve seers of either eleusine (millet) flour or roughly ground maize. The party enters the bride's house where a large gathering is awaiting them.

Daplo Kuim is performed first. Ritual beer brought by the grooms family in the gourd (Chindo/Wabuk) is held by the senior male of the brides clan and poured as libations of beer on each of the three sacred hearth stones, working round in a clockwise direction and finally on the alter (than/ damphe). The gathering is fed by the bride's family with beer (hengma/arakha), eleusine/millet (diro/jagulo), maize chakla and plenty of curried pork (baksha). Again the

Lastur- liquor with head of a pig

Lamtumma - Bidding farewell to the bride and the bridegroom

liquor brought by the relatives is served - songs are sung in "sakumbo Kura' a special ritual idiom, for the purpose of blessing the couple. There is a general 'sainu phernu'. Later in the evening or on the next day, the grooms party, escorting the bride reach the grooms house where the 'daplo kuim' is performed again, having the gourd (Chindo/Wabuk) sent by the brides family.

(B) Final Marriage Rite:

The final marriage rite can take place only if the wife's family agrees, which the husband has to go and approach the wife's family members. The time interval between the initial and final rites may be ten years or more. Economic factor also plays a major role. In the bridegrooms side all members of the local clan segment, close relatives and friends contribute dinuman/songche consisting of one mohar (half a penny) for the marriage. While in the brides side they contribute one seer of grain (eleusine / millet) for preparation of beer (Arakha/Hengma) for the guests.

The janti / procession, along with the bride and bridegroom proceed to the bride's house along with the lastur and other prestation. They are led by two Kongpies /bongpas and they carry the following gifts consisting of one ceremonial gourd and one large earthern pot, both full of millet beer (di), two large wooden vessels filled with liguor (Arakha/ hengma), a leg of pig/head of pig (Baksha/pork), twelve seers of grain along with the 'Lastur' consisting of a set of eight copper vessels. Outside the house, they are met by the bongpas/ kongpi of the wife's group and the two parties ceremoniously greet each other and offer bowls (Kasako dabukas) of liquor to each other. 'Daplo Kuim' rite is performed and then food and beer is served to the gathering. Later in the evening, the husband presents the 'Lastur' to his wife's family and again the Daplo Kuim is performed.

The Kongpies /bongpas from the bride grooms side tell the wife's side- 'the groom has brought the lastur and given it to you. You in turn have given your daughter. Accept the gifts and be happy'. The men in the bride's side tell the bride-'the bridegroom has presented the gifts for you. Now he alone has rights over you. Live happily with your husband and with your in- laws'. This act is known as "Vakdatta" - i.e the father declaring that he has given his daughter to the bridegroom in presence of witnesses.

The formal authority and responsibility with respect to the woman (jimma/ eeche-e-men) are now transferred to her husband. The importance of the final rite of marriage is that it transfers final and ritual authority as well as responsibility with respect to the married women from her natal family to her husband, secondly, it fully establishes the legitimacy of the children of the union, both those born prior to and subsequent to the ceremony itself. One of the most significant effects of the final rite is that the final bonds of marriage can no longer be broken, divorce is now impossible.

Within a year after the completion of he final rite, the brides family reciprocate with gifts (daijo/ chumri) to the bride and her husband, for the benefit of their children.

In summary, the Kirat Khambu Rai marriage is a process involving a number of discrete stages separated by time intervals rather than an event at one point in time. The interval between the initial and final rites of marriage may be ten years or more.

Marriages of a girl remains null and void if the father fails to give his daughter in marriage 'formally' which consists in declaring that he has given his daughter to the bridegroom in presence of witnesses. This act is known as *"Vak Datta"*. This practice is confined to the Kirat Khambu Rais. Even if young women elopes with a man de facto, lives as his wife, begets children, the woman remains a maiden (Kumari) in the eyes of the father and the clan unless *Vak Datta* is given. From this we can guess the importance of '*Vak Datta*'.

II) Marriage by Force (Elopement): In marriage by force, the unmarried girl is abducted willingly or unwillingly. Whether or not the girl agrees to marriage, her abductors must pay a fine to her family as damages for having flouted their authority over her marital destiny. The abductors inform the girls parents within three days and the marriage formalities are carried out later.

III) Marriage by fine Payment: (Jari) Elopement with another's wife *(Jari)* is also practiced by some Kirat Khambu Rais but such persons should face the *'Pancha'* (comprising of five elderly Kirat folks) who generally impose fine *(Jarikal)* on the person to pay the former husband.

CHAPTER 11

FUNERAL RITES

According to Charles MC Dougal (The Kulunge Rai-1979 P.124-127) The dead body is buried, only rarely it is cremated (if it is the wish of the deceased). The *Mundum* decrees that cremation must not take place.

Two rites are performed:

a. The first, Mishia is performed soon after death, when the deceased is buried in a field near the house.

b. The second, Shilum Kattu, is normally performed on the third day (in case of women), fifth day (in case of men) after death of the person {In Kulunge Rai (a subgroup of Kirat Khambu Rai)- within a month}.

Very poor households may combine the two into one rite, but this is thought to indicate a lack of respect for the deceased, and as such is reprehensible. The body is generally laid flat on a mat but in Kulunge Rai the body is flexed, with the arms crossed on the chest and the knees drawn up and tucked into the body, as in the fetal positions. The corpse is wrapped in a white cloth and this is secured by tying it with cord. It is then placed on a tilted platform prepared from bamboo, and at the head and at the foot of the platfonn is placed a basket containing buckwheat; a bamboo vessel containing beer also is put beside the corpse. The corpse has to be placed on the west side of the house with the head pointing north. In case of man, a set of arrows, a bow and a Khukuri is placed to the left side of the corpse to protect it from evil spirits,: in case of woman- a Khurpi is kept. One brass plate (Kaṣa ko thal) is kept facing down on the head and one on the feet - "dabuko ghoptyo". A copper oil lamp is kept burning at the head end of the corpse.

If death occurs in the evening or during the night, some friends and close kin remain in the house with the family until dawn, at which time the ceremony is begun. Restrictions must be observed by the next of kin, it is a taboo to cut the hair, to sing, or to give or receive formal greetings.

MISHIA:

For this first rite it is not mandatory to call a priest (Mangpa /Nokchhol /Nakchung), but one is usually summoned. One unit of grain is collected from every household in the village; if they attend the funeral they must bring liquor also. Clansmen of the deceased bring an offering of buckwheat in a basket; in addition they bring a small offering of liquor and an offering of beer. Siblings of the deceased may not drink any of the beer brought to the house from outside. During the ceremony in the house, the priest addresses the deceased, explains to him that he is being put to rest, and ritually feeds his some buckwheat and gives him some beer to drink. While this is being done, one of the priest's assistants kneeling at the foot of the corpse chops downwards through the air repeatedly with a khukuri, chanting whi, while another assistant kneeling by the head, and holding a bow and arrow, alternately chants hai, hai hai hai (hoot hoot hoot). Meanwhile, some persons prepare the 'sibalo' commemoration flags to be set by the grave, while others attend to preparing the grave it self. When the burial place is reached one of the parties shoots an arrow on the g round and the grave is dug. Even if the deceased is the owner of the land, it is a ritual to buy the land by offering one rupee coin for the burial ground. The

latter is dug about six feet deep and just long enough to accommodate the corpse on one of the fields at a level lower than t he house, and to the 'south' or toward the stream. The grave is lined on all four sides- but not on the bottom - with large slabs of stone. Two other big, flat stones are prepared so that t hey may be ready to be placed over the top of the grave after the corpse is put to rest. When all is in readiness, a chicken is killed by throwing it down on top of these slabs, a cock if the deceased is male, and a hen if female. One leg is put inside the grave and the remainder of the chicken ritually thrown away. In some Rais the wings of the chicken are sent to the house to be put under armpits of the deceased. Inside the house four men pick up the corpse on "Chelemse" - stretcher made of bamboo and woman's brothers may not carry her, otherwise there are no restrictions. The deceased is carried around the fire hearth in a counter clock wise direction being set down on the floor once on each of the four sides. The men carry the corpse out of the back door and take it to the grave, which they likewise circumambulate in a counter - clockwise direction, setting the body down on each of the four sides, ending up on the lower side, towards the stream. Women are present at the graveside as well as men. A piece of cloth is spread over the top of the grave and held taut. The men raise the corpse, and swinging it over the grave let it go, so that it drops inside carrying the cloth down with it as an under covering.

The deceased's wife gives some tobacco, which is placed inside the grave along with provisions of food and beer. The two slabs are then used to cover the top of the vault. First the wife of the deceased, and after her his sister, then his father, and finally each of those present, throws a handful of earth on top of the grave. The women then file back into the house, being purified with water mixed with marcha (fermenting agent for making millet beer) before entering the courtyard. *"March a"* (a kind of yeast-used for fermenting millet into beer) is added to water with a view to making it holy. To a Hindu the use of *"Marcha"* (which ferments rice and millet to form rice beer and millet beer) may look strange but the Kirat Khambu Rais like other tribal people have accepted intoxicating drink and meat as things relished by their dead ancestors and deities.

The men who remain construct a roof over the grave (in Kulunge Rai) consisting of matting on top of a bamboo frame. A basket with a bamboo container of millet beer is placed on top of the roof as an offering to the deceased, and is securely fastened there. The eight sibalo are then placed along the sides of the grave, four on each side.

The entire party then goes to the stream, where they wash to purify themselves. Meal is then shared at the house of the deceased, together with a copious amount of beer and liquor.

SHILUM KATTU

The last rites are performed on the third (for females) and fifth (for males). In Kulunge Rai a minimum of one month should transpire before the Shilum Kattu rite is performed; that is considered the minimum "decent" interval. This period of time is necessary to honor the deceased by "feeding" him (her), so that he (she) will be remembered by relatives a nd friends. T he spirit of t he deceased is "kept" in the vicinity in order to be so honored. Some relatives or friends may have been away from the village at the time of death, in which case they would not have an opportunity to pay their respects to the deceased. One the day following death an offering of cooked grain, meat and beer is taken to the grave; then one day is omitted and the offering again made; then two days are omitted before the next offering and so on. At the time of Shilum Kattu all outstanding financial matters relating to the deceased are discussed, and any obligations to pay debts formally recognized. The rite cannot be performed unless there is some

beef on hand, but this need only be a token amount- some dried beef is kept for such occasions. All households contribute, cooked grain, which has fermented, to the family of the deceased for the purpose of making beer. It is mandatory to summon a priest for this rite; if a priest (Mangpa) was called on the occasion of the "Mishia" rite, the same man must be used for "Shilum Kattu". The participants gather in the house of the deceased. Seated in *the* 'lower' part of the house, facing the fire hearth, the priest holds a long bamboo bow and an arrow, with the point wrapped, in his left hand, while in his right he holds a sickle and an arrow with the point bared. Chanting in "sakumbu kura", the priest instructs the deceased regarding the road to the land of the dead, "pomlalubum" and enjoins him to begin the journey. Time to time the priest simulates firing the arrow from the bow, shouting at the same time. This is to exhort the deceased spirit to depart. Before the party leaves the house to visit the grave where they will make the final offerings of food and beer and cut the "sibalo", the "daplo kuim" ritual of pouring a libation of beer over the hearth stones is performed, however, contrary to the normal practice, on this occasion,"daplo kuim" is done in a counter - clockwise direction. The beef for the deceased is roasted and beer poured on it.

The party, consisting of men, woman and children, files out of the house and goes to the grave, walking around it in a counter- clockwise direction. Each person halts and puts something into the offering basket - tobacco, sugar cane, taro, a potato, anything. The "sibalo" are then cut. With a "khukuri" a man chops through the pole on which the "sibalo" flag is suspended. The sibalo flags are then placed underneath the roof which covers the grave. It is striking indeed that the last action of the funeral drama focuses on the relation between brother and sister, giving final emphasis to its solidarity. The sibalo which a deceased man has been given by his 'sister' cannot be cut by any of his own clansmen, they cannot be cut by his mother's brother or his wife's brother, but they may be cut by his sister's husband. The culture of erecting memorial stone slabs may of course be considered as an adaptation of commemoration flags (T.B.Subba -1994: 64).

CHINTA/TOMWA

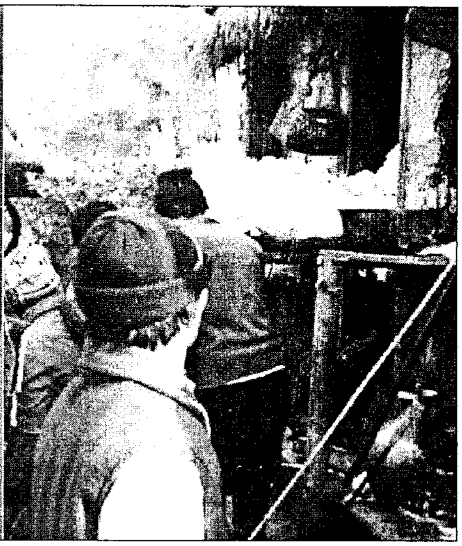
During the night Chinta/Tomwa is performed by the Mangpa/Mabimi (Dhami/Jhakri/Bijuwa) to persuade the soul of the deceased to go and reside in the Samkhalung. He chants the Mundum (Oracle Chant) and performs the last rite.

According to T.B. Subba (1994:92), on the evening of the day of purification, a priest conducts an elaborate rite called Chinta/Tomwa by the Kirat Khambu Rais. It continues throughout the night. Earlier it was held for three consecutive nights. But now, it is said that, it cannot be practiced due to the non availability of an accomplished Mangpa/Bijuwa . Ordinary Mangpa/Bijuwas cannot do it. In this rite, the soul of the dead is called by the priest who then asks it about its unfulfilled desires or reasons for its death in case of unnatural circumstances. The dialogue between the soul and the priest sometimes continues for over an hour and is witnessed by all those elderly persons who can understand the vernacular language used by the priest then. The priest is in a state of trance, shaking vigorously and speaking in the language and voice of the dead. The elderly people gathered there also to persuade the soul of the dead person in different ways so that it agrees to go and reside in the Samkhalung (Three erected hearth stones) or the place of the dead. Often, the priest finds it difficult to persuade the soul to leave the earth and it takes a lot of time and several promises before it finally agrees to do so.

Such a rite normally involves the sacrifice of fowls / a whole pig and offering of food, drinks and tobacco- if the deceased was a smoker.

Body of the deceased laid near the Samkhalung

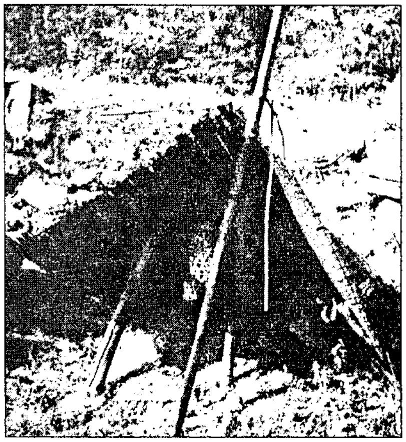
Mangpa chanting the Mundum for the soul of the deceased



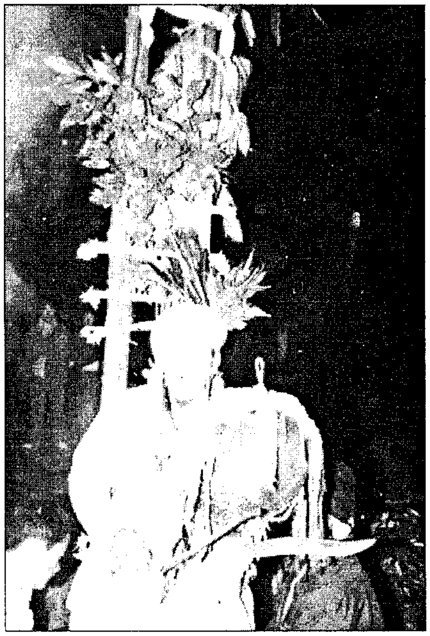
The body being carried on 'Chelemse' to the graveyard

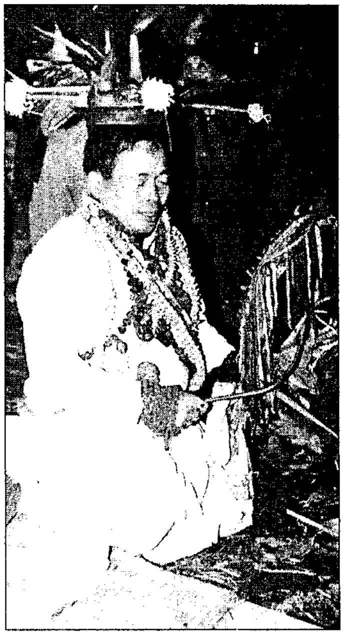
The body being laid in the grave

The body being covered with flat stones. A chicken is sacrificed while the Mangpa recites the Mundum



A roof of matting constructed over the grave





Mang Kham/Than (Sacrificial Altar) with the Hoptang (Sacrificed Pig and Red Cock)

The Mangpa (Bijuwa/Dhami) performing Chinta / Tomwa, holding Washiliken (Dhayangro) to pursuade soul of the dead to go and reside in the Samkhalung / to appease the angry spirits / for the ancesteral blessing

The Mangpa (Bijuwa/Dhami) performing Chinta/Tomwa
Photo Courtesy : Hemu Rai

CHAPTER 12

RITUAL ATTACHED WITH MAJOR TRADITIONAL OCCUPATION AND YEARLY FESTIVAL OF THE COMMUNITY:

Kirat Khambu Rais have been performing *Shikari Ritual* from time immemorial for successful hunting. *Sakewa Ritual* is also performed for good harvest, timely rains, calamity free year (in May-June) and *Sakela Ritual* is perfonned for thanksgiving for good harvest, peaceful climate (in month of November and December).

Shikari Ritual for successful hunting
Photo Courtesy : Hemu Rai

CONCEPT OF DISEASE AND TREATMENT IN TRADITIONAL WAY

Some times Kirat Khambu Rais even blame *Dewa, Sichey, Jugitra, Dogutrey* like bad spirits for headaches, nausea, vomiting. For good health and better future and general well being Kirats Rais perfonn Pitri Ritual and other deities worship. For this sort of ailments ***Mangpa*** or ***Bijuwa***

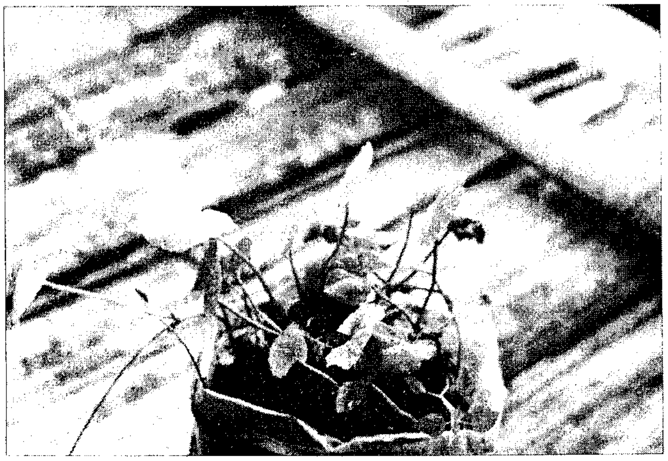
or tribal priest is summoned to appease those angry spirits, sometimes even scarifying a cock or hen and pig. Bijuwa and *Mangpa* also perform *Chinta/Tomwa* (a kind of ritual to ward off evil spirits) and *Khargo Katnu* (rite to transfer possible ill luck to sacrificed cock/hen/pig). Kirat Khambu Rais believe in ancestral blessings for the well being of the patients.

So far as other aliments and its treatments are concerned, the role of ***Baidang/Homae*** (medicine-man) is very important. He diagnoses and provides traditional herbs and medicine for the patients.

Blood of Deer (Mirga / Khisa), Gall Bladder Bear (Bhalu / Masa), intestine of Porcupine (Dumsi/Khasa), lever of monkey (Badar/Tamanchu/Popangsa), Rhododendron Flower (Guras), Chireta, Roots of Stinging Nettle (Ganam) are used as medicines.

Besar (Curcuma lorge)

Bet lauri (Costus speciosus)



Golpatta (Centella asiatica)

Chirata / Chiraita (Swertia chirata)

Some of the locally available and grown medicinal plants in the Herbal Garden:

Sl.No	Common name	Scientific name	Usage & parts used
1.	Bet Lauri	***Costus speciosus***	Used in Urinary diseases. Roots are powdered and consumed.
2.	Gol patta	***Centella asiatica***	Leaf powder used as tonic for the treatment of convulsive disorders.
3.	Besar	***Curcuma longe***	Rhizome is powdered and used for cough, cold and fever.
4.	Siroo	***Imperarta cylindricum***	Medicine against worms (Root)
5.	Ambak	***Psidium guajava***	Medicine for dysentery (Bark)
6.	Mewa	***Carica papaya***	Medicine for jaundice (fruit)
7.	Kalo Chitu	***Pedillanthus tethymeloides***	Medicine for food poisoning (Stem internodes)
8.	Tharo Unew	***Pteris biaurita***	Cuts and injury (leaves)
9.	Kutcho	***Thysanolaena maxima***	Medicine for boils (Root)
10.	Chiplay	***Pilea sp.***	Used for sprains and bone fractures. (Stem & leaves)
11.	Ainselu	***Rubus ellipticus***	Used as a medicine for dysentery (Root)

Source : Voluntary Health Association of Sikkim - Annual Report 2002-03
Paras Theezum Project & School Health programme

			Medicine against tapeworms. (Root).
12.	Kalo Banmar	***Eupatorium adenophorum***	Used for the healing of sores and wounds. (Tender shoot).
13.	Burookhati	***Astilbe rivularis***	Quick recovery from the postnatal pain, body ache and joint pains. (Rhizome).
14.	Abhijalo	***Drymaria diandra***	Sore throat & sinusitis (Young shoots).
15.	Ghewkuwari	***Aloe barbadensis***	Burns (Leaf pulp).
16.	Patle sisnu	***Laportea terminalis***	Controls blood pressure (Tender shoot and leaves). Heals wounds caused by dog bite (Root).
17.	Bojho	***Acorus calamus***	Used for the treatment of scabies (Root) Skin infection.
18.	Gol marich	***Piper nigrum***	Common cold and cough (seed). Sore throat.
19.	Pinasay lahara	***Clematis montana***	Used as a medicine for sinus (Root)
20.	Titepathi	***Artemisia indica***	Cuts and wounds (Tender shoot). Also used as a medicine for dysentery (Leaves) Leaves are used for stopping nose bleeding.
21.	Chirata/Chiraita	Swertia Chirata	Whole plant is used for fever, inflammations, dipsia, cough, bronchitis, gastropathy, dyspepsia, burning sensation and skin diseases.

CHAPTER 13

MUDDUM / MUNDUM:

According to Martin-Gaenszle-Origins & Migrations of Mewahang Rais – 1991, page 223, Oral Tradition (Thuturi Baed /Spoken Veda), is one of the most important means of cultural continuity in a non-literate society)

What Allen found to be true in the case of Thulung Rai applies also to the Mewahang Rai.The Traditional culture is oral through and through (Allen 1976 6a: 261).

Nevertheless, it may be said that the cultural heritage of the Kiranti lives on more independently and steadfastly in the oral tradition, than in any other domain. The total corpus of performed texts- that is, myths (Sacred, legend, folk tales), ritual songs and ceremonial dialogues- is called Muddum by the Mewahang, as it is by other Kranti groups. It generally refers to inherited knowledge concerning the ancestors. It comprises:

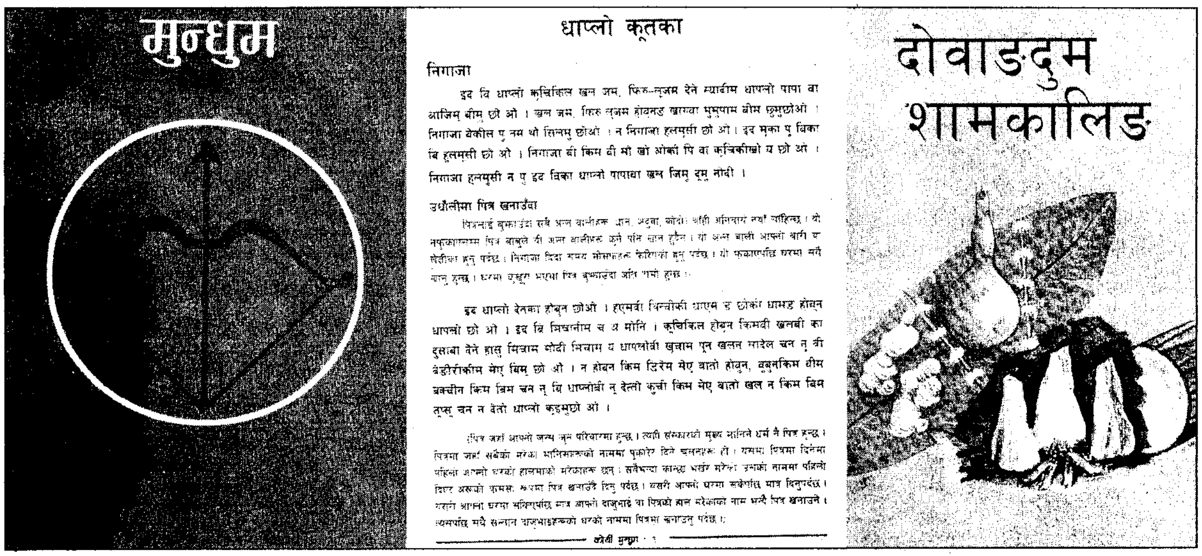
(a) Histories of the origin of the ancestors.
(b) Beginning with the primal creation of the universe.
(c) The emergence of natural and cultural orders.
(d) Continuing to the settlement of the ancestral territory.
(e) It also concerns the proper means of communicating with ancestors and ritually maintaining the order they have established.
(f) It evokes a way of life predefined by the ancestors, a self-enclosed world, rooted in the past.
(g) For the Kiranti people, it is the very essence of their culture, the foundation of their identity (cf Allen, N.J – Shamanism among the Thulung Rais ; 1976 a ; p258; Hardman, c-n.d. Vitality and depression : Religion; 1996 – p. 165, 173 Martin Gaenszle – Origins and Migration of Mewahang Rai, 1991, p.223,224

According to Imam Singh Chemjong, the word "Mundhum" means "The power of great strength" and the Kirat people of east Nepal believe it to be true holy and powerful scripture (I.S.Chemjong- History & Culture of the Kirat People vol I & II, 1966 I:21)

Hardman derives this power of tradition from the potential 'danger arising from unsatisfied and indignant ancestors (Saya) {Hardman, 1996 n.d. 175ff}There was no written religious book of the Kirat Khambo Rais, although recently, some writers have started documenting the Mundum (Thutnri Baed Spoken veda) in written form- "Mundum" – by Phanindra Kohyu –Bk Sm. 2051 and "Dowangdum Shamkhaling"-by Kirat Rai Yayokha-Bk. Sm. 2055.

Previously there was no written religious book of Kirat Khambu Rais. They solely depended on the spoken verses of religious rites by *Mangpa.* This oral narration is called *"Thuturi Baed"*- "spoken Veda". As such the cultural influence of other communities have made inroads to this less developed tribe. Other customs, festivals and traditions crept into the Kirat Khambu Rai Community due to economic and educational backwardness. However, the

distinct religious, cultural and social tradition of Kirat Khambu Rais is still being followed and observed.



Mundum / Muddhum written in Devnagri Script

CHAPTER 14

AKHIL KIRAT RAI SANGH SIKKIM

The name of the association of the Kirat Khambu Rais of Sikkim is "AKHIL KIRAT RAI SANGH SIKKIM". It was founded in March 1990 at Hotel Tibet, Gangtok, Sikkim and registered under the Land Revenue Department, Government of Sikkim on 29.6.1990, under Regd. No : 443, Vol No : I.

LOCATION: The registered office of the association is at Gangtok, East Sikkim. The jurisdiction of the Association is throughout the State of Sikkim with one head office at Gangtok and one branch office at each district head quarters and as many block offices as may be required in different blocks within the State of Sikkim.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES: The main aims of the association are:

1. Socio- economic upliftment of the poor, down trodden, educationally backward Rais residing within the various remote places of the State of Sikkim.
2. To develop civic consciousness, to raise standard of living and to take steps for development and enactment of appropriate legislation for the interests of the members.
3. To provide facilities to the members of the association for discussion of common problems, encouragement of thrift, advancement of social welfare ideas, mutual assistance, protection of interest of the members, etc. and to provide for intuition and diffusion of knowledge amongst the Rais community.
4. To attain the main aims and other objects and purposes which may be conducive to and beneficial for the members of the association, the association aims to fulfill the following further objectives:-
   a) The association shall carry or conduct thorough and detailed survey, study and research of the history of the origin, growth and expansion as well as the culture and traditions of the community of the Rais in general and put them on record or get it published.
   b) The association shall carry or conduct thorough and detailed survey, study and research of the history, growth and expansion of different languages spoken by Rais and put them on record or get it published.

c) The association shall carry or conduct thorough or detailed survey, study and research of the culture and tradition of Rais, songs like 'Juwari', 'Hakparay', 'Chamkodalay (Damkay)', dances like Sakewa and Paklewa Sili, 'Madal Nach', etc. and put them or record or get it published.

d) The association shall carry or conduct thorough or detailed survey, study and research of the reformation of various warranted and unwarranted rituals and unification of Rais and put them on record or get it published.

e) The association shall carry or conduct thorough or detailed survey, study and research for traditional excessive use of liquor, drink (local or distilled) at various function and drugs like Surti, Ganja, Vang- Dhatura, Gutka, Afim etc. and keep continuous effort to warn/restrict the people against dangerous effect of its uses and put them on record or get it published.

f) The association shall carry or conduct thorough or detailed survey, study and research on the various causes leading to the educational backwardness and continue its effort to motivate the persons concerned to avail the maximum benefit from the Government for educating their children and put them on record or get it published.

The First Central Executive Committee Members of AKRS (1990-1992)

S.No	Name and Address	Portfolio
1	Shri Andrew Rai S/o Shri J.J.Rai Balwakhani (CPWD), P.O.Rajbhawan, Gtk	President
2	Shri G.S.Rai S/o Late J.B.Rai Raigoan, Namcheybong, Block, Pakyong	Vice President
3	Shri T.D.Rai S/o Shri Parsuram Rai Shanti Niwas, Above Norkhil Hotel, Gangtok	Secretary General
4	Shri B.K.Rai S/o Shri G.B.Rai Sichey Busty, Gangtok	Treasurer
5	Shri R.K.Rai S/o Kritiman Rai	Publicity Secretary

- Under the direction of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Sikkim, Dr. Pawan Chamling, Mr. Nakul Das Rai, Hon'ble MP (Lok Sabha) and Dr. S.K.Rai had gone on 22.7.2004 to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, GOI and Registrar General of India (Census) to enquire about the progress on the Scheduled Tribal Status of the Kirat Khambu Rais and other OBC communities (present MBC). They were informed by Dr. IC Agrawal, Senior Research Officer that there were some deficiencies in our Ethnographic Report. So Additional information were to be sent to the Ministry.
- On 27.1.2005, the AKRS has again submitted additional information and photographs on the Ethnography of the Kirat Khambu Rais of Sikkim to the Social Welfare Department for onward submission to G.O.I.
- On 4.2.2005, Mr. Nakul Das Rai, Dr. S.K.Rai and Mr. Santosh Kumar Rai went again to meet Mr. D.K.Sikri, Registrar General of India (Census) and Dr.I.C.Agrawal and they have given us additional six months time for the additional and proper preparation of the Ethnographic Report on Kirat Khmabu Rais and other communities of Sikkim.
- In March 2005, the Government of Sikkim has constituted an expert Committee of renowned Historians, Anthropologists and Sociologist to assist in the preparation of the Ethnographic Reports of all the MBC communities of Sikkim.

11. AKRS has participated in the Regional Language Recognition Day Celebrations, on 27th March every year and also in the Baisakhi Nepali New Year Celebrations.
12. Kripasalyan Rai Janma Jayanti has been adopted by the SKRS as the Kirat Khambu Rai Language Teachers Day which falls on 13th July.
13. A core committee has been formed to look into the Customary Laws and Usages in respect of Kirat Khambu Rais.
14. Sikkim Herald being published every fortnightly in Kirat Khambu Rai language and script by the IPR Dept. and a Kirat Khambu Rai Editor has been appointed by the Govt. for the same.
15. Bantawa dialect has been officially agreed upon as a common lingua franca- i.e official Kirat Khambu Rai language on 15.6.1996, during the Annual General Body Meeting of the AKRS.
16. The script popularized by the late Guru Kripasalyan Rai of Daramdin, has been adopted as the official Kirat Khambu Rai Script on 23.5.1998. It is derived from Kirat Lipi.
17. In January 2003, Rai Chammary Lachep (Rai Alphabet Text Book) for primary Class and Rai Young Chaplayak Bushy Dak for Class I have been printed by the AKRS and submitted to the HRD Dept. Govt. of Sikkim. The Govt. of Sikkim has appointed two regular Kirat Khambu Rai Teachers from 2005. Apart from the Govt. Schools, the AKRS is running many schools for the propagation of Kirat Khambu Rai Language and Script.Mr. B.B.Rai has been given the charge to write and publish text books up to Class V. He has also been nominated as the member of the Sahitya Academy.

has sanctioned Rs 50.00 lakhs to AKRS for the construction of Rodung Khim (Community Centre) at Baiguney, West Sikkim and this has been paid to the contractor Mr. Chandra Khaling. Responsibility of the AKRS Central Committee is to monitor the work progress and ensure fund flow. Apart from the grant from Culture Department, AKRS members have also contributed towards the construction of the Rodung Khim. It will be completed shortly.

9. SAKEWA Festival Celebration: State Level Sakewa Celebration was organized by the AKRS in 1999 at Gangtok; followed by Namchi, South Sikkim in 2000. In 2001, it was celebrated at Soreng, West Sikkim and in 2002 at all the AKRS Block levels. In 2003 at Gangtok, East Sikkim, for which the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Sikkim, Dr. Pawan Chamling was the Chief Guest. SAKEWA THAMPU has been established at Bulbulay. Mr. D.T.Lepcha, Minister for Forest & Environment inaugurated the Thampu at Bulbulay. Plantation of trees was also done. In 2004, it was celebrated block wise.

10. Scheduled Tribe Status of Kirat Khambu Rais of Sikkim, West Bengal & Rest of India

- AKRS, Gangtok Sikkim had made representation to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India time and again in the past.
- A meeting of the AKRS members and Kirat Khambu Rai Sanskritic Sanstha (KKSS) of Darjeeling and Kalimpong, Kurseong and Doors took place in Tayakhim, Tadong, Gangtok, Sikkim on 18.7.2003. A joint petition was submitted to the Honourable Chief Minister, Dr. Pawan Chamling on 21.7.2003 for the scheduled Tribe Status for Kirat Khambu Rais.
- On 23.7.2003 a Memorandum was submitted to the Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Govt. of India by the Honourable Chief Minister, Govt. of Sikkim for the same.
- A letter from Secretary, Social Welfare Dept. Govt of Sikkim was received on 21.08.2003 for submission of Ethnographic Report on Kirat Khambu Rais, along with other OBC members, to be forwarded to GOI.
- The Responsibility for Preparation of the Ethnographic Report on Kirat Khambu Rais of Sikkim was given to Dr.S.K.Rai. With the help of AKRS members, he was able to prepare the Ethnographic Report and it was submitted to the President, Central Committee, AKRS who forwarded the same to the Principal Secretary, Social Welfare Dept. on 22.9.2003.
- Only on 7.1.2004, the Secretary Social Welfare Dept, Govt. of Sikkim, forwarded the Ethnographic Report along, with the others, to Ministry of Tribal Affairs, GOI.
- To collect the data and details of the Ethnographic Report on Kirat Khambu Rais, Dr. S.K.Rai went to the British Library, London, Bodlein Library, Oxford University, UK, Tribhuwan University, Kathmandu, Kolkata,Imphal, Shillong, New Delhi and the neighboring Darjeeling and Kalimpong.
- Dr. S.K. Rai, President AKRS C.C. has made a short documentary on the Ethnography of the Kirat Khambu Rai Community of Sikkim on 20.7.2004.

Sakewa Celebration 2000 at Community Hall, Namchi, South Sikkim
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Sikkim, Dr. Pawan Chamling,
presenting certificates to the participants.

Regional Language Recognition Day Celebration
at Government Degree College Auditorium, Tadong, East Sikkim on 27.3.2003
Paklewa Sili performed by Kirat Khambu Rai Cultural troop.

18. The Limboos and Tamangs from the OBC Communities were included in the list of Scheduled Tribe of India in December 2002. The AKRS, along with other OBC Communities (The present MBCTL), felicitated the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Dr. Pawan Chamling and the Government of Sikkim for their efforts and contribution for the inclusion of Limboos and Tamangs in the list of Scheduled Tribes of India.
19. AKRS has provided loans to the Self Help Groups in Rolep and Priklakha for their economic and social upliftment.
20. Youth Leadership Development Training Programme was conducted for thirty five AKRS College students between 10.1.2004 to 11.1.2004 at Tadong, East Sikkim. They were also given an opportunity to visit Kolkata between 20.1.2004 to 29.1.2004 and the programme was financed by AKRS. AKRS youth again attended a training programme at V.V.Giri National Labour Institute, Noida for a similar programme.
21. Abhinandan Patra and cash of Rs 10,000/- was presented to the family of the late Guru Kripasalyan Rai during the Sakewa Celebrations -2003.
22. All Kirat Khambu Rais of Sikkim assembled in the Mintokgang, Gangtok on 1.11.2003 for the felicitation of the Honourable Chief Minister of Sikkim, Dr. Pawan Chamling for being conferred the PhD (Honoris causa) by Sikkim Manipal University on 11.10.2003.
23. The work for the development of the Kirat Khambu Rai Script Computer Font has been deputed to Sikkim Computers & Systems (P) Ltd, Tadong.
24. The AKRS AGBM cum Election of the new Central Committee Executive Members of the AKRS was held on 4.7.2004. The District Committees had been formed a month earlier.
25. On 8.12.2004, the eighth foundation day celebration of the Rodung Khim, Baiguney West Sikkim was celebrated. Apart from the usual cultural programme, recitation of poems in Kirat Khambu Rai Language was done.
26. On 21.1.2005 and 22.1.2005, Preliminary Seminar on the Maha-Adhibeshan of Kirat Khambu Rais, for preservation and documentation of the history, culture, tradition, religion, dress, food, rites of passage, 'Mundum', etc was held. It was organized at Hotel Rendezvous, Gangtok and members from AKRS, KKRSS and KRY participated in the Seminar.
27. AKRS has been participating in the Bhanu Jayanti Celebrations every year on 13th July.
28. AKRS brings out its Annual Magazine 'Paruhang Sawanam' every year for which all members of the AKRS contribute articles.
29. During the AKRS meeting held at Namchi, South Sikkim on 20.2.2005 and 12.3.2005, Sub Committees have been formed for the research work on history, culture, tradition, religion, dress, food, rites of passage, 'Mundum,' etc.

There are still a lot of unfinished works to be carried out by the AKRS. I am confident that, with the co-operation and assistance of all the AKRS members from all over Sikkim, we will be able to achieve all our goals in the near future.

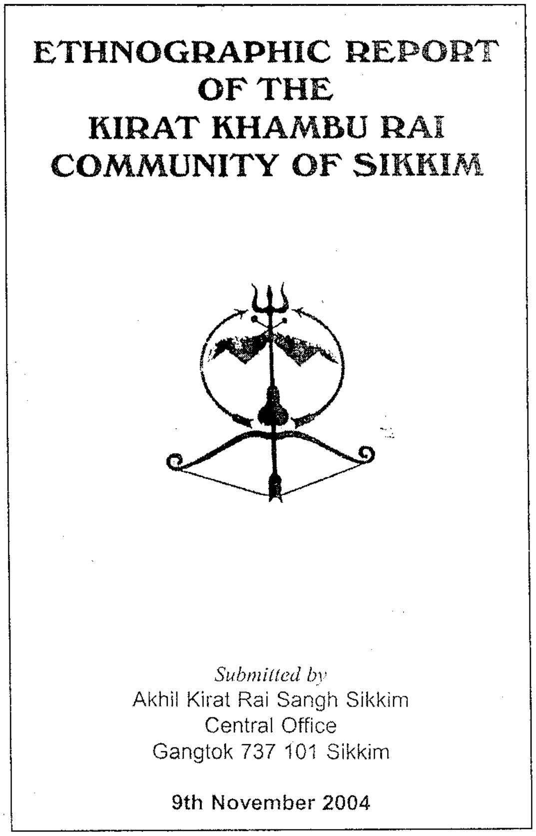
Women members of the AKRS Self Help Group get together to discuss their progress at Rolep, East Sikkim

The author with Prof. Novel Kishore Rai at Tribhuwan University, Kathmandu

The author with Prof. Martin Gaenszle and Prof. Balthasar Bickel of Germany at Tribhuwan University, Kathmandu

The author with Prof. G. P. Singh and Hon'ble M.P., Mr. Nakul Das Rai at Manipur University, Imphal, Manipur

Paruhang Sawanam-Annual Magazine of the AKRS

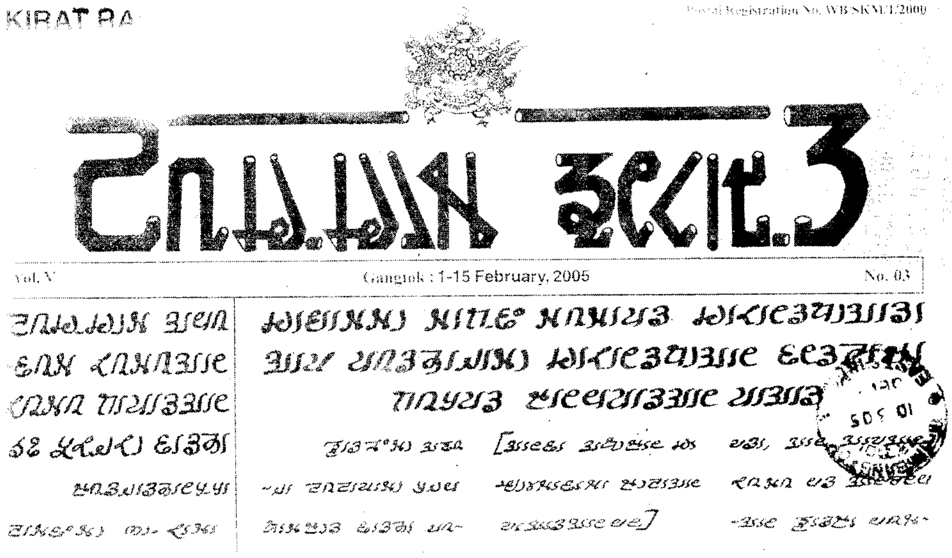


ETHNOGRAPHIC REPORT OF THE KIRAT KHAMBU RAI COMMUNITY OF SIKKIM

Submitted by
Akhil Kirat Rai Sangh Sikkim
Central Office
Gangtok 737 101 Sikkim

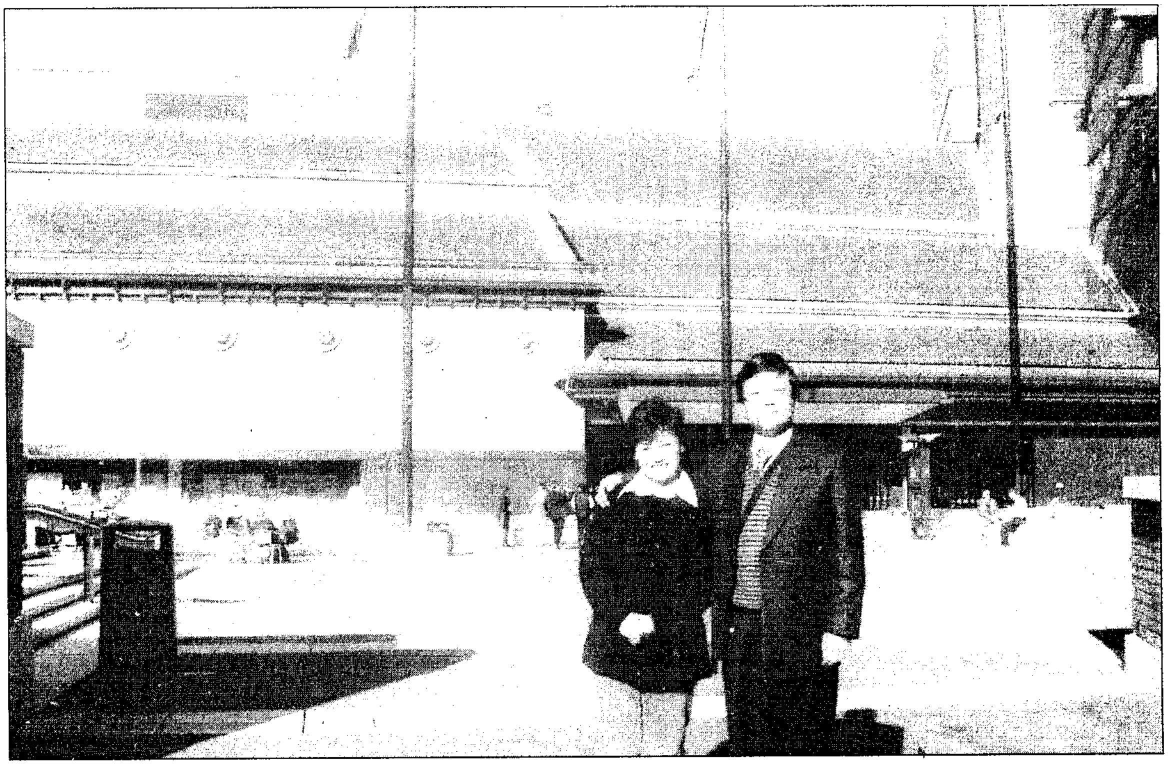
9th November 2004

Ethnographic Report of the Kirat Khambu Rai Community of Sikkim

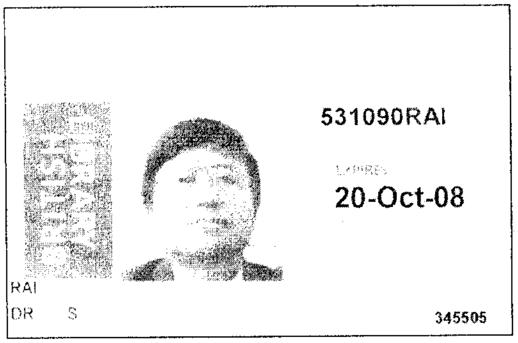

KIRAT RA

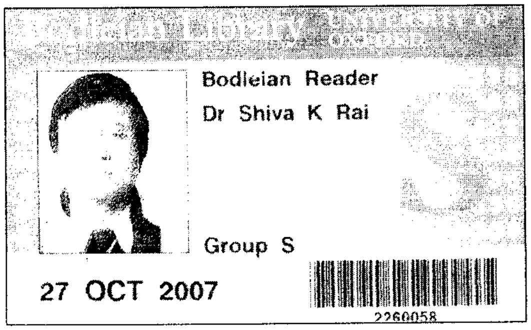
Vol. V   Gangtok : 1-15 February, 2005   No. 03

Sikkim Herald - Written in Kirat Khambu Rai language & Script



Visit of Dr. S.K. Rai to British Library, London U.K.



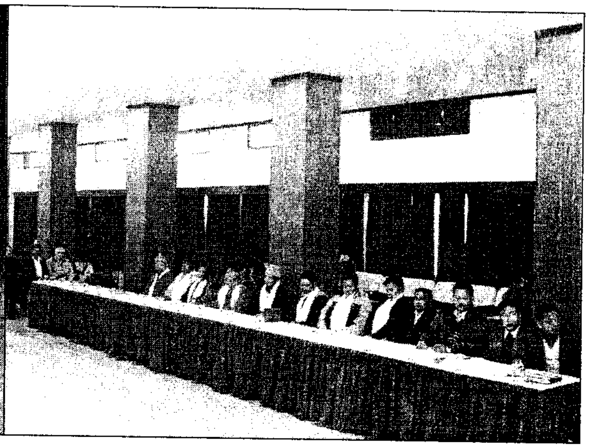


Visit of Dr. S.K. Rai to Bodleian Library, Oxford University, U.K.

Preliminary Seminar on the Maha-Adhibeshan of the Kirat Khambu Rai, held at Hotel Rendezvous, Gangtok Sikkim on 21.01.2005 and 22.01.2005

Dr. S.K. Rai, President, AKRS Central Committee, delivering his welcome address

Mr. R.K. Rai, Secretary General, AKRS Central Committee, giving an account on the activities of the AKRS



Mr. J. B. Rai, Mr. Santosh Kumar Rai, Mr. Nirmal Rai, Mr. J.P Rai, Mr. Santosh Rai and other AKRS, KKRSS & KRY members in the audience

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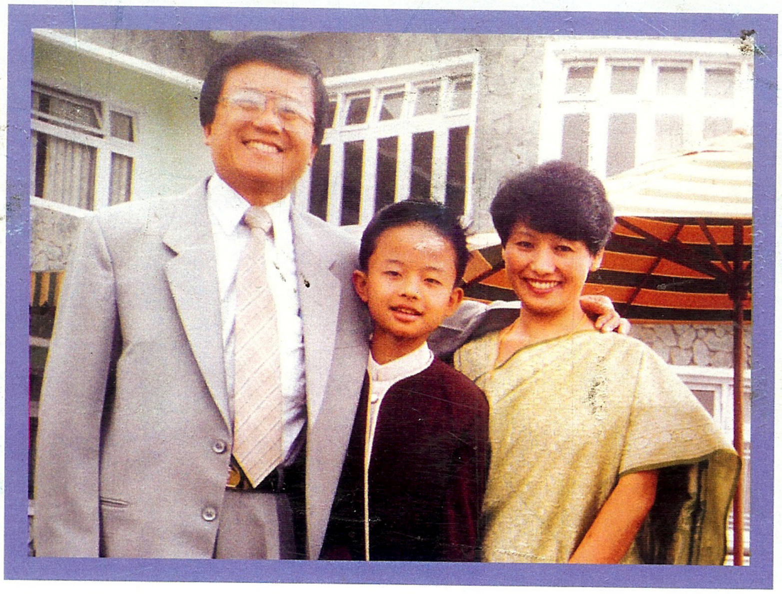

Dr. S.K. Rai is the first son of Lt. Mr. Devilal Rai and Mrs. Asha Mani Rai of Dalep, Kewzing, South Sikkim. He was born on 08.03.1961 at Kaula Lampur, Malaysia. After his father's retirement from the British Army, the family returned to Sikkim in the year 1962 and thereafter, his father served under the Chogyal's Sikkim Guards, Gangtok. For a brief period he received his education in Sikkim Guards' School, Gangtok and Kewzing School, South Sikkim. Under Sikkim Government Scholarship, he joined Dr. Grahams Homes School, Kalimpong in 1968 and completed his class XII in 1979.

He completed his Bachelor of Dental Surgery from Dr. R. Ahmed Dental College, Calcutta in 1984 and joined District Hospital, Namchi, South Sikkim on 12.12.1984. After completion of his MDS in Oral& Maxillofacial Surgery from King George's Medical College, Lucknow, he joined Sir Thutub Namgyal Memorial Hospital, Gangtok in 1994.At present he is the Consultant Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeon and the HOD, Dental Department, STNM,Hospital, Gangtok, Sikkim.

During his Schooling at Dr Grahams Homes, he was the School Captain for three consecutive years. At Calcutta he was the President of the Sikkimese Students Association, Calcutta. At present he holds the post of a Vice-Chairman, MBCTL Association; President, Akhil Kirat Rai Sangh Sikkim and Secreatry General, Sikkim Government Doctors' Welfare Association.

He is settled at Deorali, Gangtok, Sikkim with his wife Kabita and son Shivwin Kumar Rai.